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VOL. VI. NO. 7

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By Bertram D. Wolfe

THE A. F. of L. CONVENTION
By Wm. F. Dunne

SOME TRADE UNION PROBLEMS
By Jay Lovestone

TWO ARTICLES ON SOVIET RUSSIA
By A. Bittleman—J. Mindel

NOVEMBER, 1927

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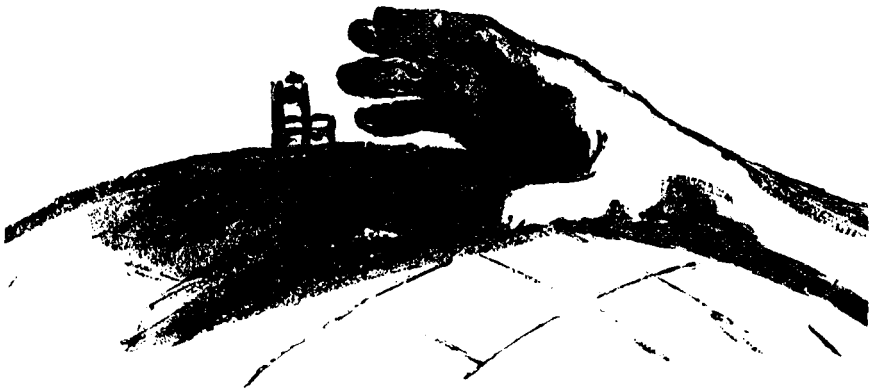

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The COMMUNIST

A Theoretical Magazine for the Discussion of Revolutionary Problems

Published by the Workers (Communist) Party of America

BERTRAM D. WOLFE, *Editor*

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Eastman Revises Marx

—*And Corrects Lenin*

By Bertram D. Wolfe

A YEAR or so ago, Max Eastman was busy proving that Trotsky was a super-leninist. Now he arises to explain—a little late for Lenin to learn from him—that Lenin was not a Marxist.

Poor Marx is annihilated by Eastman altogether. Marxism is a metaphysical religion. It has to suffer a "fundamental change." This change, moreover, is a "quite simple" one, altho no one, not even Trotsky, ever perceived its necessity before Eastman. Poor Vladimir Iliyitch, in many ways a quite admirable man and a good revolutionary engineer, died before Eastman could liberate him from the shackles of Marxism. "It seemed to fulfill some need of his emotional nature" to regard himself as a Marxian.

Lenin's practice was all right altho his theory was bad. In spots he unconsciously followed another theory, which Eastman is now for the first time stating in the columns of the *New Masses* and in the epoch-making work "Marx, Lenin and the Science of Revolution" about to be presented to the breathlessly waiting world of American revolutionists by Albert and Charles Boni, publishers.

Eastman is modestly silent in the main about the days in which he is superior to Lenin. But as for Marx, even his natural modesty cannot prevent the humble Max Eastman from suggesting that that mystical, religious, metaphysical, animistic, dialectical old duffer is beneath contempt as an "engineer."

Eastman's modesty does not consist in the failure to make claims for the epoch-making nature of his own discoveries. As to the relation between Freudianism and Marxism, writes Eastman, ". . . I think I have given the only possible solution of it in my book about Marxism." As to the conflict between Anarchists and Communists, neither Lenin nor Marx has ever understood it. "It has never been truly explained. . . . There is right on both sides and wrong on both sides. There are clouds and mountains of confused thinking everywhere. [Everywhere, *except*, eh Mr. Eastman?] Restate Marxism in the form of a scientific hypothesis, and the clouds

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and confusion disappear." Eastman is above the clouds and mountains of confused thinking. He has restated Marxism as a scientific hypothesis and rescued Leninism from its own metaphysical perversity.

No, it is not for his failure to make claims for his new science that I chide Max Eastman for undue modesty. It is because he failed or hesitated to state that he is founding a new science, a little above Leninism and clouds and mountains high above Marxism. Eastman is really offering a new "ism" and is too modest to say so. He tells what it does, but not what it is. It should be named after its founder, as Marxism or as Leninism were. It should be called Eastmanism or perhaps, for greater euphony, Eastmania.

LENIN WAS AN ENGINEER BUT MARX WAS A METAPHYSICIAN

"Lenin was an Engineer" is the title of Eastman's article in the November *New Masses*. It begins with a brief statement, according to Max of the essence of Marx. What Eastman calls "Marxian metaphysics" is so far removed from his strictly scientific and practical habits of thot that he does not make a good job of stating the essense of Marxism. But we could afford to skip it even if it were a good statement of so metaphysical and obscure a doctrine. Lenin, however, is somewhat better. He "instinctively and impetuously—notwithstanding some academic assertions to the contrary—conceived Marxism" as Eastman consciously does. Hence he was an instinctive and unconscious follower of Eastmanism, altho peculiar "emotional needs of his being" prevented him from ever quite dropping "the Marxian way of thinking and stating our thots." "I," says Eastman, "want to drop this way of thinking." (It must be hard for Eastman to "drop the Marxian way of thinking"—as hard as it is for a pauper to drop his extravagant way of living.)

EASTMAN'S EPOCH-MAKING DISCOVERY

"By organizing the class-struggle and carrying it forward to a dictatorship of the proletariat, it will be *possible* to usher in a communist society. That is Marxism in the form of a practical science." (Emphasis Eastman's—B. D. W.) This, says Eastman, is all there is to his fundamental revision of Marxism!

Simple, isn't it? "But its consequences are enormous."

Of course, Marx never thot of "organizing the class struggle."

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Of course, Marx never thot of "carrying it forward to a dictatorship of the proletariat." Of course, Marx never thot that the outcome of the modern class struggle might be the destruction of civilization if the working class is defeated. Of course, Marx believed that the revolution would fight itself without being organized, and would win itself without the working class being victorious. It took Eastman to make that discovery and thus convert Marxism into "the form of a practical science."

". . . to make revolution itself a 'profession,' was a very real departure in a philosophy which regards revolution as an *automatic* outcome of the struggle of classes," writes Eastman. (Italics mine —B. D. W.) What was Marx's profession, Mr. Engineer? For a metaphysician who thot everything was automatic, he did an awful lot of fighting, didn't he? And a lot of organizing for one who had never read your statement of "Marxism in the form of a practical science." It seems that Marx was something of an "unconscious engineer" himself, doesn't it? It seems as if he, like Lenin, "instinctively and impetuously . . . conceived Marxism in this latter way, and so acted upon it. . . ."

METAPHYSICS

We will come to the question of "fatalism," the "automatic" revolution and the question of "organizing the class struggle" in a moment, but first let us understand what Eastman means by the word "metaphysics." He does not use it as the official philosophers do to mean the investigation of the "ultimate reality"—the nature of knowledge, truth, time, space, matter, etc. Nor does he use metaphysical as Marx and Engels do to mean the opposite of dialectical—namely, to mean a concept of the universe as fixed, rigid, static, unchanging, made up of absolutes and eternal verities. Eastman seems to use the word metaphysical for any concept he finds hard to understand. Hence historical materialism and Marxism in general are, for Eastman, metaphysical.

THE QUESTION OF THE "AUTOMATIC REVOLUTION"

Eastman has taken very little trouble to acquaint himself with the theories of Marx. He seems to have acted on the principle: "I know nothing about the subject, therefore I can speak freely." Or, perhaps he is basing himself on the theory that it is best not

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to read up on what you are discussing since it hampers your originality of thot.

Hence Eastman is able to convince himself and to attmept to convince the reader that Marx was a fatalist, or automatist—that history, according to Marx, "works itself out" without the active intervention of men. Thus Eastman: "A dialectic materialist is bound to conceive the revolution as *automatically* produced by the contradictions in capitalism . . ." (Emphasis mine—B. D. W.) The only role that Eastman's version of dialectical materialism permits to the "Marxian scientist" is to "bring consciousness to the process or serve as its theoretical expression. At the most he (Marx) may permit this Marxian scientist to accidentally accelerate the movement."

Lenin, on the other hand, believes that revolutions do not come of themselves but have to be organized. In this he agrees with Eastman except that Lenin could not understand Marx and thot that Marx was also for organizing the revolution.

Lenin, according to Eastman, does not assign an active role to the proletariat either. The proletariat serves as "material" for the super-engineer who organizes the revolution or builds the bridge to the future out of moving human material that serves his purposes. For the "engineer" to concern himself with the nature of his material, to believe that a certain class of "material" is peculiarly fitted by its interests, its condition of life, its very nature and role in society, to make the next revolution in human history—that, according to Eastman, is "metaphysics." And to believe that that "material" can and should be endowed with consciousness of the nature of its interests and the role its conditions of life fit it to play in the making of history—to believe that the one who seeks to lead the working class (or manipulate the material) should conceive his task as that of awakening the working class to its role, why that would be as stupid, metaphysical and religious, as if a mechanical engineer would try to explain to iron and steel why they were destined to make a bridge rather than cheese and butter serving as bridge materials.

Thus Marx, according to Eastman, is a fatalist and Lenin a doer, Marx a prophet and Lenin an organizer, Marx a theoretician and Lenin a man of action (whose theories were wrong but whose practice was right), Marx a priest and Lenin an engineer, Marx a metaphysician and Lenin a scientist.

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THE QUIET LIFE OF A METAPHYSICIAN

A passing acquaintance with Marx's life or the most superficial study of Marx's works would have convinced Eastman to the contrary and thus prevented him from making his "original contribution" to Marxism, Leninism and the *New Masses*.

Marx was a man of action from 1842 when as a young man of 24 he began to edit the Rheinische *Zeitung* which was suppressed the next year by the Prussian government, till the day of his death. All his works are polemics of the struggle in which he always actively engaged. He began studying economics because he found it necessary in his politics—his struggle against reactionary laws and the Prussian government. His theoretical activities were intimately linked up with, derived from and motivated by his revolutionary activities. He was an organizer of the revolutionary movement unceasingly. Where there were no organizations he sought to organize them. Where organizations existed with inadequate or incorrect programs, he joined them and sought to improve their programs. Not as a super-engineer manipulating his materials, but as a working class organizer and leader, as a revolutionary thinker and fighter, he tried to organize the class which his analysis of society convinced him was to accomplish the next big step in social progress, and he tried to give that class a clear consciousness of its interests and potential role in human history.

Wherever revolution was, there rushed Marx. From country to country, from storm center to storm center, from exile to exile, such was the life of the "pedant" Marx. His activities in the League of the Just which he converted into the Communist League and whose program he revised, his activities in the struggles of 1848 to '52, his activities in the British labor movement, his share in the organization and theoretical and practical direction of the First International, his activities on behalf of the Paris Commune—in short, his whole life was the life of what Eastman would call a revolutionary engineer except that unlike most engineers he had to develop his science as well as apply it. And when he was getting too old to fight and saw death coming on he wrote wistfully to his daughter and son-in-law on the occasion of the birth of a child:

". . . for my own part, I prefer the 'manly' sex for children born at this turning point of history. They have before them the most revolutionary period man has ever to pass thru. The bad

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thing now is to be 'old' so as to be only able to foresee instead of seeing."

This Eastman might have learned from the life of Marx.

Or he might have turned to his works. He might have opened the "Eighteenth Brumaire" and would not have had to read even beyond the first page to find Marx's "fatalism" about "things working themselves out" without the organized effort of men, expressing itself in the dictum:

"Men make their own history." So much for the benefit of the fatalists. And then for the benefit of super-engineers who reagard the study of historical conditions and tenencies as "metaphysical and religious" he immediately adds:

"Men make their own history but not out of whole cloth [freie Stuecken], not out of circumstances chosen by themselves but out of circumstances found ready to hand, and handed down from the past."

Or Eastman might have turned to another little pamphlet, quite easy to read even for one who labels as "metaphysical" whatever is a little hard to understand. Eastman might have turned to "Revolution and Counterrevolution" and found a whole series of suggestions on how to organize a revolution—strategical and tactical suggestions dealing with revolution as an art. The book is rich with such material but I will quote only a single passage:

"Now, insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. Those rules are logical deductions from the nature of the parties and the circumstances one has to deal with in such a case . . . [how terribly metaphysical!] Firstly, never play with insurrection [hear that, Mr. Eastman?] unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play. . . . Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed uprising; it is lost before it measures itself with its enemies. Surprise your antagonists while they are scattering, prepare new success, however, small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendancy which the first successful rising has given to you; rally these vaciliating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse, and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of

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Danton, the greatest master of revolutionary policy yet known, *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!*"

Or if Eastman believed that it would be a handicap to his originality and scientific temperament to read such metaphysical rubbish as the works of Marx and Engels, he could have found the same passage quoted and utilized by Lenin, who Eastman admits was an "engineer" even tho an unconscious one.

The more Eastman reads in the works of Marx, skipping if necessary the parts he finds hard, the more he will find that they are full of such practical directions in revolutionary "engineering." Believing as Eastman does, that Lenin is not a Marxist, he will be astounded to find that Marx is more of a "Leninist" than he suspected. In such a book as "Class Struggles in France" he will find Marx 'way back in 1852 developing the theory of proletarian hegemony over other revolutionary forces, the theory of the necessity of alliances for the proletariat, and an analysis of the role of the peasants in the proletarian revolution. He will find the proletarian dictatorship there. He will even find the proletarian dictatorship and the elaboration of concrete transition measures for the nationalization of banks and transport and land, etc., in the "Communist Manifesto" of 1847. And perhaps he will begin to understand the one weakness that he sees in Lenin, the latter's "emotional need," to attribute some of his practices to Marx and to regard himself as a Marxist.

THE PROFESSIONAL REVOLUTIONIST

It is when Eastman takes up the concept of "professional revolutionist" developed by Lenin in his conflict with the petty-bourgeois intellectual ideology of the legal marxists and economists, that our discoverer of the profession of revolutionary engineering treats us to the most thoro confusion and most solemn nonsense he has written so far. Eastman is a profound intellectual snob, standing, as he modestly admits, above Marxism, above Leninism, above the labor movement and even "above society." Consequently he seeks to refashion Lenin in the image of his own snobbery.

Lenin attacked the petty-bourgeois intellectuals for their demagogic flattery of the most backward tendencies in the working class and their efforts to keep the working class on that backward plane by limiting their activities to elementary economic struggles and preventing them from developing a real struggle of class against

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class for the conquest of power. Eastman converts this into an attack on the working class.

Lenin attacked revolutionary "amateurs," dabblers and dilletantes who thot they could lead the working class without devoting their lives to it, making a profession out of it, learning how to organize, how to outwit the police, how to lead the workers' struggles without exposing them to needless defeats. Eastman finds comfort even in this attack (which should make his ears burn) and twists it also into an attack upon the working class, into a justification of amateurishness, and "above-society-ness," and dilletante intellectual snobbery.

Lenin attacks those false leaders who tried to limit the activities of the working class to mere trade-unionism and thus tie them in politics to the tail of the cart of the bourgeois politicians—an attempt similar to that of Green and Woll and Co. to "keep politics out of the labor movement." And Eastman converts it into an attack upon the working class and the trade unions.

Lenin points out that the communists must deepen the struggles and experiences of the working class beyond the mere trade union A B C of fighting a particular boss to a deeper understanding of the nature of society, the nature of the class struggle as a whole, the role of other classes in society and the role of the working class —in short, Lenin points out that the working class must learn the fundamental lessons of Marxism. And Eastman construes this as an attack upon Marxism.

Lenin declares that petty-bourgeois intellectuals were by training and temperament little fitted for the discipline of a revolutionary movement, that they wanted to write articles without submitting to party censorship, wanted "freedom to revise Marx" instead of learning from him what he has to contribute to revolutionary proletarian science, that they wanted to lead the working class without knowing anything about its life and without becoming a part of it, that they wanted to be treated as revolutionary socialists without joining the socialist (now communist) movement, that they wanted the "name without the game." Such petty-bourgeois intellectuals he flayed unmercifully. He declared that only by breaking with the class from which they had come, only by becoming "proletarianized," by becoming part and parcel of the proletarian revolutionary party, by devoting their lives to the revolutionary movement, by subjecting themselves to its discipline, by changing utterly the mode

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of living which developed in them individualistic tendencies, could they become fit for participation in the leadership of the working class. For those who from outside sympathized with the working class and tried to serve it, he had a ready appreciation. But for those who from outside tried to lead the working class (or rather mislead it), to tell it what's what, from above to condescend to offer theoretical nonsense and dangerous false advice, he had the profoundest contempt and hatred and fought them mercilessly. At the same time, for the intellectual who became part and parcel of the proletarian movement, who joined the revolutionary party, submitted to its discipline, broke loose from his old method of living, apprenticed himself to the revolutionary movement and learned its theory and its practice, its science and its art, acquired its habits of thot and tested himself in the fires of struggle, he had a different attitude. "In the face of these general characteristics of the members of such an organization *all differences between workers and intellectuals must disappear completely* [emphasis Lenin's—B. D. W.] not to speak of the differences of trade and occupation." This Eastman twists into "Lenin repeatedly declared that 'it makes no difference'* whether they belong to the working class or not."

To put it briefly, Lenin says that once you have become an integral part of the working class and its revolutionary organization, it makes no difference what your origin was provided you become a genuine socialist (communist). Eastman distorts this into: "It makes no difference whether you belong to the working class or not."

"Lenin saw," continues the aristocratic Eastman, "that they [the revolutionaries] must be a distinct body of men who 'stand above society' and are thus able to understand it."

"Standing above society" as Eastman conceives it has nothing in common with Lenin's concept of the revolutionary.

"And his [Lenin's] arrant insistence upon centralized authority and military discipline in that body of men, smacks more of the tactics of Blanqui than of the philosophy of Marx." And your remarks are an unconscious echo of Bakouin's ferocious attack upon Marx and the Central Committee of the First

* Note: I want to call the reader's attention to the charlatan method of quoting pursued by Eastman. He puts the words "it makes no difference" in quotation marks, thereby insinuating that his own words immediately after (the words, "whether they belong to the working class or not") are really a paraphrase of Lenin's.

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International for Marx's "arrant insistence upon centralized authority." The anti-leninists of Russia made the same charge against Lenin but "it seemed to fulfill some need of his emotional nature" for Lenin to declare that this "arrant insistence upon centralization" was derived from Marx.

The profound snobbery of Eastman and his fundamental anti-working clas prejudice expresses itself in his attitude toward the working class as "material" for himself and his fellow revolutionary engineers to manipulate. The working class, according to the scientific Max, is not to be given a consciousness of the role it is to play in the revolution. Oh no, that would be metaphysics. Let us adopt the attitude of the "practical artisan who is doing work, and . . . not seriously deceiving himself about the historic destiny of his own material [here Eastman means the working class] or the essentially decorative function of his own brain and volition." (Here I don't know what Eastman means.)

Here's a day dream for you! Narcissus falling in love with his own reflection had nothing on Eastman when it comes to admiring himself. His rapt fancy is gazing upon the seductive vision of himself in the role of a great social engineer, standing a little above Lenin, mountains high above the metaphysical Marx and, of course, "above society," aworking with his human materials, the labor movement. He sees himself "building a bridge across a stream" for the future to walk over. His materials are human beings which he treats as lesser engineers treat steel and iron. It is "absurd to make your calculations upon the assumption that the properties of steel and iron are such that they are going across the stream and you are lending consciousness to the process."

After this majestic vision, anything else would be anti-climax so we will bring this tribute to Eastmanism or Eastmania to a close without by any means exhausting the subject. The last words we will leave to Lenin who seems to have anticipated Eastman's new science and had it in mind when he wrote:

"People bend every effort to elaborate something extraordinary and in their zeal to be intellectual they become ridiculous. . . ."

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Surrender Raised to a System

The Work of the Last A. F. of L. Convention

By William F. Dunne

> "We love American institutions, and whenever they are assailed the millions of working men of America will rise in defense of these institutions and these principles."
>
> *President William Green in his opening speech to the Forty-Seventh Annual convention of the A. F. of L.*
>
> "I have often been startled by the identity of the statements of President Green and those of the captains of industry."
>
> *Major-General Summerall, speaking at the A. F. of L. convention after Green had introduced him as a "Friend of Labor."*

FOUR days after the adjournment of the forty-seventh annual convention of the American Federation of Labor, during whose sessions the ambient atmosphere of Los Angeles was charged with the high-pressure patriotic sentiments quoted above, and others too numerous to list here, the United States Supreme Court, American institution *par excellence*, decreed that the United Mine Workers of America was an outlaw organization and prohibited it from organizing in the state of West Virginia.

The same decision outlaws all strikes which affect enterprises producing articles of interstate commerce and puts the "yellow dog" contract high on the list of American institutions.

The rewards of virtue in the form of complete subservience to the institutions of American capitalist government, are quick and decisive. It is clear that no action or utterance of the A. F. of L. convention added to the fear or respect of the American capitalists and their government for the labor movement.

The report of the executive council to the convention contains the general line and the specific recommendations which the Los Angeles gathering followed. It is in this document that is found,

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in all its miserable truckling to American imperialism, the "Monroe Doctrine of American Labor" and the "higher strategy of the American labor movement."

The executive council's report sets a new mark for reaction in the labor movement. Its tone is studied and deliberate. It is written in the style affected by factory experts and there is little doubt that some of them now on the research staff of the executive council, had a hand in its composition.

Virility is totally absent from this document. There seems to have been a successful attempt to eliminate anything that smacks of struggle. In fact, the executive council admits that this is the case. On page 16 of the report is to be found the following statement:

"*Formerly Labor has allowed spectacular incidents of strife* to overshadow the more important events of constructive development and service. The Federation has taken the initiative in reversing this attitude . . . *by shifting attention from problems of defense or aggression* . . . the relative importance of sustained work of the union becomes more obvious."

It is this denial of the necessity for and emphasis upon struggle which undoubtedly prompted the executive council to omit in its report all reference to the fact that its most important union—the United Mine Workers—had been on strike since April 1. In view of the concentrated attack upon the miners' union, of so fierce and sustained a character that it threatens the union with destruction, this omission is not only one of the most extraordinary instances in labor history, but startling evidence of the determination of American labor officialdom to disregard and discourage even strikes forced upon thousands of organized workers in basic industry.

PRESENT PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN LABOR

A number of major problems confronted the labor movement at the time the executive council compiled its report. These problems were unsolved as the convention went into session. They can be listed as:

1. Combatting the injunction menace in an effective manner.
2. Mobilization of the labor forces for the national elections in opposition to the capitalist class and their political parties.
3. Organization of the unorganized—resistance to the capitalist offensive.

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4. Struggle against the militarization of the American working class and the danger of imperialist war.

To not a single of these questions did the executive council give an effective answer in its report, nor did the convention even attempt a reply.

Confronted by such facts as the attack on the U. M. W. A., the increasing number and scope of injunctions, evidences of a slowing down of industry and increasing difficulties of even the privileged building trades unions, the executive council instead of drawing the inescapable conclusion that a new attack on the unions is under way, dodges all such unpleasant realities and actually reports "a more friendly attitude on the part of employers" toward the labor movement.

This "friendliness," the executive council neglects to state, manifests itself only where the unions have become efficiency organs, as on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and elsewhere. The executive council makes a bid for a continuation of the terms of surrender by saying on page 25 that "*there is nothing that the company union can do within the single company that the trade union can not develop the machinery for doing and accomplish more effectively. Union management cooperation . . . is much more fundamental and effective than employee representation plans for cooperating with management.*"

NO STRUGGLE, SAY BUREAUCRATS

Then, to make assurance for the bosses doubly sure, to prove that official labor leadership has no intention even of beginning an open struggle against company unions, the report goes on to state that "*the question at issue here is not one that should be decided by conflict*—unless employers force that course."

"Let us get together—even on the question of company unions," this is the tenor of the plea. Even the tottering old Sam Gompers would have been ashamed to sign his name to such a statement.

The only spark of militancy displayed at the convention on this question flared up in the breast of another ancient—Andy Furuseth. Bitter foe of the Communists, baiter of I. W. W.'s, Furuseth still hates the soft voice of surrender and the poses of silk-hat unionism. He protested the statement that the bosses were growing more friendly and warned the convention of the danger facing the labor movement. Furuseth said:

"The executive council talks of the growing friendliness between

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employers and labor. This is not the case, at least in my experience. The disposition to use fair words in places where employers and labor come together has indeed increased, but they remind me of the soothing phrases of the surgeon before he wields the knife. The entire tendency of the times is against putting any reliance in the fair intentions of the employers and their instruments. Big business has absolute control of the United States today.

"I have seen labor drifting from bad to worse for many years, because you have not had the courage to act. I am not a Communist, and if you want to call me one I don't give a damn, but I am here to warn you of the coming slavery. The stonecutters' decision by the federal supreme court was a most emphatic warning. It said that men may not quit work because materials coming in from another state are non-union. Carried to its logical outcome, this decision would prevent such gatherings as the A. F. of L. convention and you may have to meet in future underground, as in the early days of trade union history."

THE INJUNCTION MENACE

The injunction menace has a direct connection with the whole question of the legal status of the trade unions. It may surprise many persons to know that in the United States *the labor movement has no legal right to exist.* The capitalists have never admitted that unions come under the head of "American institutions."

In spite of its pretensions, the executive council was forced to admit the inferior status of the trade union movement. "Among the outstanding problems which confront the labor movement," said the executive council, "we would place first the securing of an equitable legal status for the union." Since this statement was made the supreme court has still further outlawed the labor movement by its decision in the West Virginia case, which was in the courts when the executive council made its report.

Not only have the strikes which affect interstate commerce been prohibited, but the "yellow dog" contract has been legalized. In this field also the executive council and the convention were unable to report any progress. On the contrary the council has to state:

"Use of yellow dog contracts has not decreased. Employers in many states have been *compelling their employees to sign contracts* not to belong to unions as a condition of employment."

In this field of activity—fight against injunctions, "yellow

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dog" contracts and company unionism—thus barren of achievement, the council confines itself to recommendations, hoary with age, for amendments to anti-trust and anti-combination legislation.

For progress in the sphere of social legislation, the executive council was able to report two world-shaking achievements—the inclusion of longshoremen in workmen's compensation laws, and "liberalization of the rates in federal workmen's compensation."

Only one state legislature (Montana) out of 44 meeting in 1927, has approved the child labor amendment to the constitution.

In 1924, says the executive council, "*both parties ignored the pleas of labor.*"

Yet this same body, casting all rules of evidence to the winds, declared to the Los Angeles convention that:

"The successes of the non-partisan political campaign of the American Federation of Labor have been gradually becoming greater. A larger number of wage earners every year sees the benefit of nonpartisan action."

One delegate, Max Hayes of the Typographical Union, raised his voice against this brazen display of loyalty to the parties of American capitalism. Hayes was rebuked promptly by John Walker, president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, who stated that he, too, was once blind like Hayes but "that his eyes had been opened." Illinois workers will be inclined to think that the return of his eyesight to normal coincided with the greasing of the palms of Illinois labor leaders which accompanied the expenditure of the $300,000 slush fund of Frank L. Smith, the traction trust candidate for United States Senator in the last election.

A. F. OF L. HAS NOT ORGANIZED THE UNORGANIZED

No achievements could be reported in organization of the unorganized. Even Detroit, where a year ago the executive council, under the lash of the hardboiled open shoppers, hurled a challenge to the automobile capitalists, cannot furnish any tale of results beyond two conferences of union officials.

But the executive council delivered a highly interesting dissertation under the head of "How to Organize Highly Machinized Industries." The section under this heading carefully evades any mention of such old-established and unorganized basic industries as steel, meat packing, oil refining, etc. It speaks only of relatively

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new light industries. With the exception of automobiles, it deals specifically only with secondary industries, like radio manufacture, vacuum cleaners, mechanical refrigeration, etc. The inference is that these industries have developed so rapidly that the labor movement has not yet got around to the job of organizing them.

Carrying this inference to the ridiculous extreme, the executive council recommends that each central labor union set up a special committee "*to be on the watch for new industries.*"

But some important admissions are made in this section.

One of these admissions is that organization in "highly machinized industries" requires "*new kinds of skill and new group bases*" and that there "*must be a new basis of appeal.*" The only answer to these facts, admitted by all honest trade unionists, is the program for amalgamation and industrial unionism put forward by the Communist and left wing workers. The executive council and the convention which endorsed its recommendations see only the "*need for study of the mass production industries.*"

MEMBERSHIP OF A. F. OF L. DECREASES

Including loss of members suffered by the United Mine Workers, which does not show in the official per capita tax membership report to the convention, the A. F. of L. has decreased in strength by at least 100,000 since the last convention.

This is its "achievement" in the organization of the unorganized.

The convention refused to pass a resolution demanding the withdrawal of troops and gunboats from Nicaragua and China. No delegate supported this resolution, which had been referred to the Los Angeles convention by the New York State Federation of Labor convention, but the executive council made its introduction an excuse to make clear its support of American policy in China and, by having the convention turn down the resolution, reverse the action of the American delegates to the Pan-American Federation of Labor who voted for a resolution asking the withdrawal of troops from Nicaragua.

More than that, the resolutions committee took the opportunity in its report to rebuke persons who introduce anti-imperialist resolutions. The committee accused such persons of being desirous simply of criticizing the government.

The united front with the American legion was reaffirmed and

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the delegates were informed by President Green that army airplanes were at their disposal if they wanted a ride.

THE A. F. OF L. AND THE SOVIET UNION.

The Soviet Union did not become the target of the customary planned attack for the simple reason that no resolution calling for recognition found its way to the convention floor. The attack this year was incidental and the general policy of the bureaucracy clearly designed to attempt to create the impression that recognition of the Soviet Union is no longer an issue in the American Labor movement.

But the return of the first American Trade Union Delegation a few days before the opening of the convention, and the publication of its report following the convention, is an assurance that New Orleans, the scene of the next convention, will witness a struggle for recognition of the Soviet Union on much more concrete and effective lines than ever before.

In addition to the new information at hand in the Trade Union Delegation report, there is the announcement of the 7-hour day for Soviet Union workers which will give American trade Unionists a chance to make some comparisons between this achievement and the attack of the government and the bosses upon the United Mine Workers and other unions.

None of these things is calculated to add to the peace of mind of the official advocates of efficiency unionism and unqualified support of American institutions.

POLICY ON IMMIGRATION FROM MEXICO

It developed at the convention that the executive council has succeeded in forcing upon the Mexican Federation of Labor an immigration policy similar in all essential aspects to that of the A. F. of L.

Its chief points are as follows:

1. That the Mexican government is to be petitioned to adopt a restrictive policy and if necessary, to enact legislation to that end, excluding all peoples of oriental birth or extraction.

2. That consideration be given to the exclusion of all immigrants deemed unsuitable to the moral, physical, political and economic integrity.

3. That the Mexican government be petitioned to consider and to enact a restrictive immigration policy, which, in substance, shall conform to the Immigration Law requirements of the United States.

4. That the Mexican government be petitioned to adopt a

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method of regulating emigration so as to give full and complete enforcement to the immigration policy herein recommended.

In return for agreement to these provisions by the Mexican Federation of Labor, the executive council of the A. F. of L. agrees not to agitate for the establishment of a "quota" against Mexican workers.

It is doubtful if in labor history there is a more outstanding and flagrant exercise of power by an imperialist labor leadership over the labor movement of a semi-colonial country menaced by a powerful imperialist government.

It is also of great importance to note that in the struggle which took place in the convention over the question of Mexican immigration, the Mexican labor leadership was lauded for the reason that it had ABANDONED THE IDEA OF ORGANIZING AND ARMING THE TRADE UNIONISTS FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE REVOLUTION.

A. F. OF L. AND THE NEGRO WORKERS

Continuing its aping of the policy of American imperialism toward oppressed races the convention refused to pass resolutions calling for the abolition of discrimination against Negro workers and for their organization on a basis of equality with white workers.

The convention was held in an atmosphere of "red-baiting" and the usual trappings of police and detectives which have become an inseparable part of all A. F. of L. gatherings.

The chief of the secret service of the Los Angeles police department was made an active member of the credentials committee and aided Vice President Woll and Secretary Morrison to exclude William Schneiderman, a delegate from the Office Workers Union, who is a Communist. Sidney Bush, a food worker who is also a Communist, was arrested in the convention hall and Trade Union Educational League resolutions for which he was trying to get support promptly became a Communist "Plot."

Carl Haessler, managing editor of the Federated Press was also arrested in the general drive upon all *left wing and progressive forces* which might introduce a discordant note into this assemblage of Wall Street's labor agents.

So assiduous were the detectives of the Los Angeles police force, notoriously the instruments of the open shop chamber of commerce,

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in "protecting" these labor leaders from Communist and left wing workers armed with resolutions for a labor party, amalgamation, withdrawal of troops from China and Nicaragua, recognition of the Soviet Union, etc., that the *Los Angeles Examiner* was moved to mild protest. Not on the grounds that the police were going too far, but that labor officialdom was itself the best bulwark against radicalism. The *Examiner* said:

"One need only recall the recent history of the A. F. of L. to judge how utterly absurd it would be for anyone to try to put over on its national assemblage an attack on the American government. *During the war period no more effective work was done to make that venture a success than by this same organization. And if any group is to be given special credit for keeping Bolshevism out of this country as well as it has been kept out, the A. F. of L. should be nominated for the honor.*"

"If it really was the intention of the so-called 'Red' under arrest to start some anti-American agitation, he certainly picked the wrong time and place.

"If he knew the character and temper of the men whose principles he was seeking to undermine—assuming that he was—*he would thank his stars he never got as far as the convention floor.*"

We can think of no better quotation with which to close an article on the forty-seventh annual convention of the A. F. of L. than the above.

A CONVENTION OF CONSCIOUS REACTION

It remains only to say that the convention was dominated, not by blind, but by conscious reaction.

It moved deliberately and rapidly closer to the policy of the state department in Latin America and China. It gave less consideration than ever before to fundamental labor issues—a labor party, amalgamation, organization of the unorganized — and in the face of federal injunctions which have outlawed the most important union in decisive coal fields and which will make illegal all important strikes, it confined itself to empty denunciation.

The convention made itself one with the militarists. The A. F. of L. leaders fraternized with the chief-of-staff of Wall Street's army.

It praised the leadership which has smashed the furriers and cloakmakers unions by a united front with bosses, courts, police and

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gangsters. It would not even demand militantly a pardon for Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, but referred the matter to the executive council. Not by so much as a word did it recognize that the rank and file of American labor had shown in the fight for Sacco and Vanzetti an understanding, determination and militancy which proves that the masses are ready and willing to struggle against oppression.

The convention gave to the American labor movement no program except that of surrender. This policy of surrendering the rank and file of the labor movement to American capitalism by the official leadership is what "the higher strategy of American labor" really means.

NO RANK AND FILE EXPRESSION

The extraordinary measures taken by officialdom to prevent any rank and file expression in the convention enables it to say that no opposition to its policies appeared. But at the same time it has removed itself farther from the rank and file than ever before, and thus will be less able than in the past to check effectively the gathering force of the left wing which now can point to the disastrous consequences of the "constructive" policy of the official leadership. This policy has as its two outstanding achievements the disruption of the United Mine Workers and absolute helplessness in the face of a combined attack on the part of the bosses and their government which is destroying the labor movement.

Even the policy of trade union capitalism, that pet project of the A. F. of L. leadership, has been discredited by the collapse of the Locomotive Engineers adventure. It has but one method left, and that is to take up still more energetically the roles of police informer and persecutor of Communist and left wing workers in behalf of an imperialist government that is preparing for war.

In this role the Greens, Wolls and Lewises will break their necks.

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Some Trade Union Problems

By Jay Lovestone

(The following article is part of a speech delivered by Comrade Lovestone in the discussion on the trade union report at the Fifth National Convention of the Workers Party.)

COMRADE DELEGATES: I propose to deal with some basic questions and some basic experiences of our Party in the past two years.

Nobody will deny that one of the basic problems of our Party is to deepen the struggles on the economic field. Nobody in this convention questions that. There is no disagreement in this convention over this matter. We may disagree in a particular instance as to the approach towards realizing this purpose, but there is no disagreement among us about the necessity of revolutionizing the labor movement and of giving a greater and deeper basis, a political basis, to all these struggles.

I propose to deal with two main questions and then try to take up some of the experiences discussed by Comrade Foster.

What is the outlook in the trade unions for the development of class struggle? Comrade Foster said that the report of the Political Bureau very properly concluded that an economic recession has set in. There is as yet no deep depression: it would be equally wrong to say that the deep depression will not come within the following months. What is the logic of this? What conclusions are we to draw?

THE SHARPENING ECONOMIC STRUGGLE

It is our contention that because of this very economic recession there will be an increase in the number of strikes, there will be a sharpening of the economic struggles. The problem for us is the following: How can we translate the sharpening of these struggles, the increase in the number of strikes, into organizational values and into organizational strength for the labor movement?

Those of us who will analyze the history of the American trade union movement will find that it is during periods of economic prosperity that the trade union movement gains its greatest strength.

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Yet, here we have had in the last two years a situation in which we had as high a point of prosperity in America as ever before, and still there was no increase in the membership of the trade unions.

What is the cause of this? We face here a basic question. Why is it that contrary to all the evidence of the history of the American trade union movement in previous years, in the period of economic prosperity, there has not only *not* been an increase in the membership of the trade unions, but actually there there has been a decrease? The only increase the American Federation of Labor had last year was the Passaic textile workers brought into the A. F. of L. over the heads of Green and Woll and not with their help. Why is it? It is my contention that there are three basic causes for this exception to the ordinary, normal experience of the American trade union movement.

WHY THE UNIONS DO NOT GROW

The basic reasons for the trade union movement, in this period of economic prosperity, not having gained in numbers, as it did in previous periods of this character, are the following:

(*a*) First, the role of the government today. The American government has never been a "government of the workers, by the workers and for the workers," but never before was the United States government so vicious, so brutal, so openly a strike-breaking government as it is today.

(*b*) Secondly, the labor leaders of this country have never as a class been progressive. There have been exceptions. There were times when the old Gompers spoke of the need of abolishing capitalism. There was a time when there was a strong progressive movement in the miners' ranks, a progressive movement which dominated to a large extent the official life, the strategy, the ideology of the miners. That is gone. Today we have a different situation. *There is a close union of the bureaucracy with the employers.* The bureaucracy in the trade union movement today is not merely non-progressive. The bureaucracy in the trade union movement today is the spearhead of the exploiting class in the ranks of the proletriat. This union, this unity, this developing class collaboration leadership, developing complete union, I should say, of the bureaucracy with the employers, is another basic cause for the stagnation of the trade unions during a period most favorable for a gain in membership.

(*c*) The third basic factor; the present methods and tactics of the

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employers. Today the employers, as Comrade Foster has correctly stated, have developed a whole system of counteracting the movement for the organization of the workers. When I speak of the employers, I do not forget their agents in the ranks of the labor movement. I do not forget the theory worked out by Woll. I do not forget the $200,000 appropriation at the last American Federation of Labor Convention to study company unionism and the report to be written by Mr. Woll. In fact, Mr. Woll had the basis of the report written before the $200,000 were appropriated. Don't ask us why he wanted $200,000. (*Laughter.*) This report says the objective of the trade unions is to become organizations which will supply efficient, obedient, disciplined workers, who can produce so much that the employers will be able to afford to give them such a decent living that they won't even have to strike or fight for it!

These three are the outstanding factors responsible for the trade union movement not gaining in membership, not gaining in strength organizationally in a period most favorable for such progress. Our Party must develop such trade union tactics and programs as will enable it to overcome to a large degree these objective obstacles.

A second basic point: We must be able not only to deepen our trade union struggles, but we must be able to inject into the political situation those issues which of and by themselves, when treated in the narrowest sense, are so-called "trade union issues."

For instance, Mr. Coolidge has decided that he does not "choose to run." The class which owns Coolidge, the class which Mr. Coolidge serves, may decide he should choose to run. Then Coolidge will run and he will run faster than ever to the White House, because once that class decides he should run, they will put their foot down on any opposition to his not getting home in the White House. If Coolidge runs, or another strike-breaker, like Dawes, runs, or this liberal governor of the liberal state of Ohio, Governor Donahey, who is responsible for and on whose hands is the blood of innocent defenseless locked-out miners, who is responsible for the persecution of all the miners who are being starved—or let us say Fuller, the governor who murdered Sacco and Vanzetti—if any of these run, we must be ready in the trade unions to talk of the political meaning of the nomination in terms of trade union issues. Massachusetts has given many valuable lackeys to the exploiting class of this country. In this respect, Massachusetts runs neck and neck with Ohio. This gentleman from Ohio, we must remember,

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is a liberal. He believes in freedom of speech for the employers; he believes in freedom of assemblage for the workers when they stay at home. He may run.

Particularly these issues should be brought into the trade unions. We can politicalize the trade unions. We can inject certain issues that will appeal to the most conservative trade unionists in our campaigns. Such issues as "Why not have the right to organize?"

We have spoken of the trade union bureaucrats. When we speak of the trade union bureaucracy, do not look at Woll, look at the forces behind Woll. When you speak of Green, do not look at Green only, look at the organization from which he hails, look at the masses. These bureaucrats know how to respond to masses, because if they didn't know how to respond to them, they would not know how to do some of the dastardly work they have done in controlling those masses for long periods of years.

THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The right to organize must be made a major issue for the workers and therefore a political issue directly proportional to the extent these bureaucrats go to the right.

The question of injunctions, the right to strike, must be emphasized in 1928. Whoever runs on either of the major Party tickets —Coolidge, Dawes, Donahey or some other servile tool of the ruling class of this country, we, the Party, must through our trade union apparatus, through our whole trade union machinery in the next election campaign, introduce such issues as will mobilize the masses for the sharpest struggle against the employers. Therefore the trade union work of the Party is basic and vital.

Comrade Foster has dealt very briefly with the building trades situation. It is my conviction that the building trades situation at present is a key to the next stage of the struggle. If you examine the history of the trade union movement you will find that, frequently, national general open shop offensives have been launched with an attack either on the building trades or the textile workers as a prelude. You might say, why against them both at the same time? The textile workers are among the lowest paid and the building workers the highest paid. This seeming contradiction is not a contradiction. It is a reality. Because the building trades are among the highest paid, the moment there are signs of recession in the building trades (which is a key to the prosperity maintained

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in this country, to the extent we can call it prosperity, for the past two years)—we have increasing signs of an attack on the building trades workers. This State Investigating Commission they have been having in New York, this Legislative Commission to investigate standards in the building trades, is not in any sense a commission to investigate standards; it is a commission to hand down a report which will say the workers in the building trades are overpaid; it is a commission that will enable the capitalist press to come out with propaganda more effectively than before, to say the building trades are robbing the public; it aims to mobilize the "public" against the building trades workers who will resist the next attack upon them.

THE OPEN SHOP OFFENSIVE

And if these experiences and lessons from the history of our class struggle are not to be laid aside, the impending attack on the building trades union is a signal for us, a storm signal, that an attack of the open shop now is being prepared for an offensive along the whole front.

It is true the employers don't always accept even company unions. The General Motors doesn't think of giving even a company union to their workers. Even a company union is revolutionary to General Motors. They will not make the slightest concession to recognize the workers or give them the right to assemble in halls—even these collective bargaining schemes, these class collaboration schemes of Woll, Green and Company, will be wiped out in an open shop offensive.

The Party must work out such programs as will enable us to respond to these needs of the workers, and mobilize them for struggle in the next few months.

THE MINERS' STRUGGLE

Regarding our coal campaign—the importance of the Party's campaign in the mining industry can never be overestimated. It is the Miners' Union that has given us the President of the A. F. of L.; that has been the backbone of loyalty in the A. F. of L. Today the Miners' Union represents the greatest aggregation of true proletarians in the A. F. of L.

Our Party has been the driving force in the campaign of the progressives, of the left wing, in the miners' struggle. Have we made any mistakes? We have made mistakes. Those mistakes are

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primarily of two sorts—first, of an organizational character, secondly of an overestimation on our part of our resources to meet so big a task. I don't want to say the Party should not have tackled it, but I think some of us overestimated our strength in the miners' organizaion and the strength of our fractions. It is true we can criticize our fractions in Illinois, even in Pittsburgh, and also in the Anthracite work. But, comrades, this was the first time in the history of our Party that our trade union fractions were called upon to function as fractions, as real agencies of leadership of non-Communist masses, in the basic union of the A. F. of L. And then Lewis! There is no worse gangster in the entire A. F. of L. than Lewis. Sigman will have to learn the A B C of reaction from Lewis. There is no worse parasite infesting the labor movement than this man Lewis. In the face of such organized reaction, I say, on the whole our comrades have done well.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE ANTHRACITE

What about the Anthracite situation? If, firstly, you can compare the number of votes cast by the progressives in the Anthracite with the number of Party members we have; secondly, if you take into consideration the fact that the Anthracite has been the strongest base of reaction in the United Mine Workers; thirdly, if you take into consideration the fact that among the Anthracite miners in our Party we have the lowest proportion of native American elements, to lead those miners against a very high proportion of organized, skilled fakers who have opposed every radical measure in recent years—I say, the comrades in the Anthracite did a splendid job, all their mistakes to the contrary notwithstanding.

Southern Illinois: We had here a more favorable objective situation. We had more American elements in our Party, and more progressive forces to lead the workers. Yet in southern Illinois, with all these favorable circumstances, our Party fraction fell down even in face of a situation where there was a split between Farrington and Lewis, and Farrington was driven out of the organization. Yet, suppose these errors were made. The comrades of southern Illinois are not to be condemned. They are to be helped to organize more effective fractions.

COMMUNISTS AND PROGRESSIVES

Comrade Foster raises an issue of having clear points of distinction between progressives and ourselves. He is correct when

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he says it is not always easy to distinguish ourselves clearly from them. I think we can make a united front with progressives sometimes from the top to get the grip on the bottom and in order to give sufficient encouragement to the timid left wing at the very bottom. Once the timid left wing forces see certain progressive leaders, even so-called progressive leaders, moving forward one inch, they will leap yards forward. We must be adroit, skilled, careful in our strategy and in our tactics.

We have three stages, three points of demarcation in our dealings with the progressives at this time in the United States. First of all, we must find the progressives with whom to unite. It is very easy to say: "Progressives, progressives!" We have a very hard time to *find* progressives with whom to unite. Once we find them, we must learn how to hold them, how to work with them. It is easy to say the bureaucrats are crooks and fakers. We have done too much of that. We must criticize them, but we must learn how to criticize them concretely and in a fool-proof manner. The third stage is to learn not only how to work with the progressives, but how to break with them, if necessary, in such a way as to take the masses away from them. We should not put so much emphasis at this time, today, on breaking with progressives when we are still in our infants' clothes, trying to find progressives with whom to unite.

I have no objection to breaking with progressives, if and when necessary, or to making ourselves clear and distinct from them. Not only this. I say we must more than ever before make our position clear and distinct from progressives, but in such a way as will not repel progressives from us. I confess that in many of our activities, not only trade union activities, but activities for the labor party and in other united fronts, we have broken with progressives when justified, but the manner of the break was a disastrous one. That we must avoid in the future.

THE RAILWAY WORKERS

About the railroads: I fully agree with the importance attached to this question by Comrade Foster. But in speaking of railroads we must avoid one error. Do not speak of the railroad workers as a homogeneous mass. There are hundreds of thousands of unskilled workers on the railroads and our Party can approach these unskilled and semi-skilled workers much more easily. Comrade

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Foster spoke of the Watson-Parker law. Let no one come here and say that because I am going to quote a reactionary of the worst calibre in the trade union movement, I base myself on the labor fakers. I am going to quote President Sheppard of the Railway Conductors, who has issued a slogan—"Down with Arbitration." When Sheppard, who is an honarary chairman of the National Civic Federation, is compelled to issue a slogan, "Down with Arbitration," then I say, down in the depths of the rank and file of the Railway Conductors there is something brewing. When Sheppard is compelled by the mass pressure from below to say "Down with Arbitration" then the Watson-Parker Law has gone a long way towards getting its teeth knocked out, insofar as it contains any capacity to hurt us by taking away from us masses of workers. It is still a most dangerous piece of legislation on the books against us; but our Party must not be blind to these remarks and policies of the Sheppards, not because it is Sheppard, but because it is the interests of the workers which are involved and which the Sheppards have betrayed. Therefore the situation is favorable for us at this time in this respect.

THE RUBBER WORKERS

A few words about rubber: At Akron, did we have a failure? No, we had a setback. The struggle in Akron is far from over. Have we made mistakes in Akron? Of course. We have made mistakes in the needle trades, in Passaic also. But the policy of the Central Executive Committee for Akron has been and is correct, as Foster says. Comrade Foster cannot point to a single instance where Amter violated any instructions of the C. E. C.

Comrade Foster, I think, was guilty of an unfortunate slip of the tongue when he said Americans are notoriously difficult to organize. I beg to differ with that. If you will look at the unorganized, you will see that it is not so.

What about the Americans? Are they notoriously difficult to organize? If we examine the trade unions, we find it may be harder at certain times to organize the Americans, but once they are organized, they stay organized; they stay organized a long time, not because of Anglo-Saxon supremacy, but because of the experience they have had. I have no admiration for Anglo-Saxon "supremacy," and I do not admire those who condemn the foreign-born. The foreign-born workers are earnest fighters, but much

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more difficult to organize. Certain Americans it is very difficult to organize and in Akron we had these Americans whom it is difficult to organize. You will have to learn how not to view any event merely as a mistake but to discuss, and analyze, and not to jump at conclusions without examining the specific issues. When your learn that, you will be nearer the achievement of a correct trade union policy.

What kind of Americans have we in Akron? They come from that section of America where a trade union is an outlaw organization. They are largely Americans from the south—Foster says they are Klansmen—and this means that they have a reactionary ideology. Secondly, the workers in Akron have had a history of bitter and degrading defeats. These defeats have not yet been erased from their memory. It is difficult to organize the steel workers. The history of the defeats of the steel workers, and Foster knows that better than any one of us, is a serious obstacle to our organizing them. The strategy and skill of the employers in Akron were never adequately taken into consideration by the entire Political Committee when we got into the campaign. Amter, with all the errors he has made, and we do not deny it, and the Political Bureau sustained Comrade Foster when he criticized Comrade Amter—Amter has made a contribution to the Party's campaign of organizing the unorganized when he, single-handed and without help, with repeated appeals to the Political Committee to send him American elements, which we couldn't do because we didn't have them available, made a contribution. If we want such contributions, don't demand condemnation of those comrades, because that will discourage comrades and not encourage or inspire them.

THE PASSAIC TEXTILE STRIKE

To be brief about Passaic: The significant thing about Passaic is that it came at a time, it was a struggle at a time, when no struggles were in sight—at a time when reaction was sweeping the trade union movement—at a time of no strikes. Passaic has certain lessons aside from this. I will not analyze, but enumerate them. What was the real contribution of Passaic to the American trade union movement and what is its source of pride for every Communist? It is in the following six points:

1. In Passaic, we fought a struggle for elementary, basic demands in such a way as to point out the real role of the government,

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not only the local, county government, not only the village constables, but down to or up to President Coolidge—you can take your choice of directions.

2. In Passaic we learned to utilize class divisions among the bourgeois; we injected the question of tariff in textiles.

3. Our propaganda in Passaic was concrete and dramatized. The trouble with our Party propaganda is largely that we talk above the heads of the workers, or at them; we seldom talk *to* the workers. In Passaic we talked to them with moving pictures, with helmets, with armored cars; and they know that language, because they have been through the hell of the struggle. And I tell you that when we say the poor workers are oppressed, we can say it a thousand times and our faint voice is drowned by the bellowing voice of the bourgeois press which says everything is well. But in Passaic we not only said the workers were weak and sick, but we gave facts and figures of investigations by an authoritative workers' health agency. This also was a contribution to the struggle of the workers in the United States. I read such facts and figures in the reactionary trade union papers, purchased and owned and financed by the employers, and even these black sheets were compelled to publish on the front page these findings of Passaic.

4. We utilized skilfully the role of the women and children in the class struggle. And they have a role. In Passaic we showed how to draw them into a struggle so that the struggle for an increase in wages, the struggle for the right to belong even to that conservative union, the United Textile Workers, was also their struggle, and the women had a big place there.

5. The struggle was not a struggle of Passaic alone. It was a class struggle, in which the workers in many cities of the United States were mobilized in the form of relief conferences for Passaic. If we could have learned to do that with the needle trades, if we could have learned to do that in the miners' struggle (I speak uncritically, and in a constructive spirit), if our Party could have learned to apply this strategy in the miners' union, we would be further ahead.

6. Last, but not least, in Passaic we followed in a model way the policy of bringing unorganized workers into the main stream of the labor movement.

We made mistakes in certain dealings with reactionaries, at certain specific moments in not criticizing sharply enough the bureau-

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crats. But these mistakes, I say, fade into the background, when you compare these six contributions to strike strategy in the United States.

THE TRADE UNION EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE

On the Trade Union Educational League we are today much clearer and have a much better understanding and have had our errors corrected in our attitude towards the T. U. E. L.

Who would dare come today with a T. U. E. L. program, in which there was a demand for the proletarian dictatorship? We realize we speak of today, and the present dark conditions for us in the labor movement, when the reactionary leadership have the trade unions hamstrung, are trying moments for us. Who would come today and advocate the inclusion of a proletarian dictatorship clause in the T. U. E. L. program? We would propose to the left wing that it should "water down" the program a little if it had the "dictatorship" in it.

Nobody would come today to say there is no room for the T. U. E. L. and that there is no distinction between left wing and progressive.

The T. U. E. L. has had three stages of development:

1. Comrade Foster was very correct when he said that when the T. U. E. L. was first organized we had the railroad amalgamation committees. When the T. U. E. L. was first organized, it had a splendid approach, but something happened between that first splendid approach and the new, revised, splendid approach of today. It is partly correct to say the Federated Farmer Labor Party came between. The La Follette movement came between these two periods of the T. U. E. L.'s life. These made a very deep impression on all of us. Some of us reacted one way; others another way. I say our Party, as a result of the defeat of the La Follette movement at the hands of the big bourgeoisie in 1924,—that the majority of our Party at this time swung mechanically, and too mechanically, to the left and became narrower. Nobody will deny that today. All of us, in varying degrees, did that. In the combination of several left wing papers into one, we had a mistaken reaction to the temporary collapse of this big basic movement toward the left. The La Follette movement was a movement toward the left. Its defeat caused in us reactions which were further causes for the weakening of the T. U. E. L.

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The Party has grown out of this, the second period. We have a new period where we are realists regarding the T. U. E. L. The T. U. E. L. must emphasize not only the immediate aims, not only the question of a labor party, but at this moment more than ever before, in the face of the danger of war, must emphasize the question of international trade union unity. We have not said enough about that question, particularly on the break-up of the Anglo-Russian committee, on the swing to the right at Amsterdam, on the sharpening of hostilities between Amsterdam and the Red International of Labor Unions. Our Party in America must adapt itself to its own specific conditions and emphasize international trade union unity.

In no other phase of our Party work is factionalism as criminal as in the trade union work. I ask you comrades under no circumstances to inject factional prejudices or concepts in this work. If in this basic work we come forward with perverted, with prejudiced ideas, we will have no basis in this country to lead the workers towards Communism.

A CORRECTION

The statement of page 372 of the last issue of THE COMMUNIST, in the article on the Conference of the Pan-American Federation of Labor in Washington, that "The substitute resolution was accepted without a dissenting vote. (Only Martinez and Nicaragua abstained)" is incorrect.

Only Martinez voted against this substitute resolution.

ARNOLD ROLLER.

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Chemical Warfare

By Robert Macdonald

EVER since poison gas was first used in warfare, the newspapers and magazines have printed articles about it pro and con. The pacifists and liberals have painted ghastly pictures of its inhumanity, while the militarists and the professional chemists have praised it and pointed out that treaties against its use are just scraps of paper. At frequent intervals the stunt-press comes out with the report that some foreign power has discovered a new gas so powerful that two drops will wipe out an army! Amid all this propaganda, counter-propaganda and silly rumor, it is important that Communists should have a more exact knowledge of the properties and strategic value of this most revolutionary development of modern warfare.

In the first place, the talk about "only 2% casualties" from gas must be put straight, for only by having this clearly in our minds can we fully understand the strategic importance of gas. Official records show that out of every 100 Americans gassed, less than 2 *died*, and very few of the remainder were *permanently* injured. (Altho the number made more subject to diseases of the respiratory tract, such as catarrh, bronchitis and tuberculosis, cannot be calculated.) On the other hand, out of every 100 American casualties from all other forms of warfare, about 25 died, and from 2 to 5 were maimed, blinded or disfigured for life. Let no one think that this proves that gas is "humane," for it can cause agonizing torment for months, but its *permanent* results are less severe than the more christian, respectable and "humane" high explosives. Old-fashioned army officers thought the only way to win a war was to *kill* the enemy. Experience has shown that it is more effective, for instance, to burn one's opponent with mustard gas. This not only removes him from active service for from one to six months, but requires elaborate hospital care behind the lines, thus further embarrassing the enemy. A corpse can be forgotten.

THE FIRST GAS ATTACK

Since the days of the first gas attack in April, 1915, chemical warfare has changed and developed tremendously, but it is worth

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while describing that first attack because it so well illustrates the importance of gas, and also two of the basic principles of gas strategy. The Germans selected the northeast part of the Ypres salient, and secretly installed the heavy cylinders containing chlorine, one of the commonest of peace-time industrial gases. When the wind was right, the gas was discharged. The Allied troops, unwarned and completely unprotected, choked to death or fled in wild disorder. Here, then, are emphasized the importance of *surprise* and of *protection*, for later, when the Allies set up a gas discipline and learned how to make simple gas masks, chlorine fell off greatly in importance. Had the Germans taken full advantage of that attack, which left a gaping, undefended hole in the lines, as the Allies now admit, they could have broken through to the Channel ports and the war might have ended very differently from the way it did.

GAS VERSUS GUNS

Old-fashioned war might be said to be a war of blows. An adversary was subdued by being *hit* with a club, a tomahawk, a sword, a cannon ball, a rifle bullet, or shrapnel. Chemical warfare sought man's Achilles heel,—his tenderest and least protected parts. First his lungs were attacked, then his eyes, then his nose and throat, and finally his skin. This use of definite types of chemical compounds for definite use has led to the great basic physiological classification of all poison gases, thus: 1. Lethal gases (gases that kill). 2. Lachrymators (tear gases). 3. Sternutators (sneezing and vomiting gases). 4. Vesicants (gases that attack the skin). Often it is very difficult to draw the line, for the properties of all gases overlap somewhat; thus a gas may be both sternutatory and vesicant, or lachrymatory and lethal.

Of all the thousands of organic chemical compounds, only about 28 were actually used in the war, plus about 16 mixtures of these gases. Actually, the number of "gases" which are really effective and which can be produced and used on a large scale, is much smaller than that. We may now describe some of the most important members of each class.

1. LETHAL GASES

Lethal gases are designed to do just what their name implies—to kill. They are drawn into the lungs and act both by direct poisoning and by causing intense pulmonary congestion and asphyxiation.

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Chlorine

Chlorine, the first gas to be used, comes under this classification. It is a greenish yellow gas which can be compressed into liquid form, and thus be transported. It is easily produced by the electrolysis of common salt (sodium chloride), and is used on a large scale in the industrial world. Since it is two and a half times as heavy as air, it rolls along the ground in a death-dealing cloud. It has a very irritating effect on the membranes of the nose and throat, and its lethal concentration is 2.5 milligrams per liter of air. (There are 28,300 milligrams in an ounce; a liter is about a quart.) This figure is the concentration required to kill a dog if he breathes it for 30 minutes. When more deadly gases were developed, chlorine was used less, but it still is very important in the manufacture of other gases. Nowadays, chlorine would only be of value against a completely unprotected population.

Phosgene

Phosgene (carbonyl chloride, $COCl_2$) was the second gas used in the war. It is produced from chlorine and carbon monoxide (CO) which is the deadly ingredient in illuminating gas. After the Allied troops had learned to protect themselves against chlorine, the Germans mixed phosgene with chlorine. Phosgene is much more poisonous than chlorine, for only 0.3 milligram per liter of air is a deadly concentration. It is important to notice that even before the war phosgene was an important industrial chemical used in the manufacture of dyes. Its most important property is its *delayed effect*. In low concentrations, soldiers may breathe phosgene for some time apparently unharmed. Ten or twelve hours later, or sooner if they do any work, their lungs fill with liquid and they die or become serious casualties. During the war, phosgene was not only used in projectors, but was used in large quantities in shell.

Superpalite

Superpalite (or diphosgene or trichloro-methyl chloroformate, CCl_3COOCl) as it was variously called, is a liquid boiling at 128° centigrade. This compound is about as poisonous as phosgene, but it has the advantage over phosgene of being much more *persistent*. This gives it certain strategical advantages which will be described later. During the war, American chemists were not successful in

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manufacturing superpalite on a large scale, but the Germans used large quantities of it, alone and mixed with chloro-picrin.

2. LACHRYMATORS (*Tear Gases*)

The next type of chemical to be used in the war caused temparary blindness due to intense pain in the eyes and copious tears. The lachrymators developed later in the war were about sixty times as effective as those first used. In the concentrations necessary to produce blinding tears, lachrymators are not poisonous. Indeed, should you walk into a room containing only enough to go on the head of a pin, you would feel as though someone were tearing your eyes out with his finger nails. Yet if you run out immediately, in fifteen or twenty minutes you are quite all right again.

Workers are particularly interested these days in tear gas, because the police and the big manufacturers have taken up this new weapon. It has never been difficult to protect oneself against tear gas. During the first part of the war, gas-tight goggles were used. Later the ordinary gas mask was used. The great value of lachrymators is against unprotected troops (or workers), or in causing troops to work in uncomfortable gas masks for long periods of time. They are very "economical" because a few shells are sufficient to harass large numbers of people.

Brom-benzyl Cyanide ($C_6H_5CHBrCN$)

This tear "gas" is a solid which melts to a liquid at room temperature. It was developed by the French toward the end of the war, and although large scale manufacture was achieved, very little was actually used at the front before the armistice. It is such an excellent lachrymator that only 0.0003 milligram per liter are necessary to cause sufficient pain to make it impossible to open the eyes. Another compound which would have been important as a tear gas during the war is CHLOR-ACETO-PHENONE. This is a solid also, and has to be shot from a pistol, grenade or gun in order to be scattered about. This compound has been adopted in various cities by the American police.

3. STERNUTATORS (*Sneezing and Vomiting Gas*)

This class of compounds was used to produce sneezing and vomiting, so that the gas mask had to be taken off, and then some much more poisonous gas finished off the victim. They cause intense pain and irritation of the nose, throat and respiratory channels.

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They are mostly arsenic compounds, and are not only sternutatory, but also toxic, producing the after effects of arsenic poisoning.

Diphenyl-chloro-arsine

Pure diphenylchloroarsine [$(C_6H_5)_2AsCl$] is a colorless solid melting at 44° C. It was used in large quantities on the western front, and is the most important of the arsenicals. The Germans succeeded in preparing it in standard apparatus and from ordinary industrial raw materials. It was used in warfare either dissolved in some other toxic liquid in shell, or in shell with a charge of high explosive to scatter it far and wide. At first it was very formidable, because it existed in the air as tiny particles and went through the gas masks, which could only remove gases. Special smoke filters had to be designed to remove it. "It causes sneezing and severe burning sensations in the nose, throat and lungs in concentrations as slight as one part in ten million. In higher concentrations, say 1 in 200,000 to 500,000, it causes severe vomiting. While neither of these effects is very dangerous or very lasting, still higher concentrations are serious, as in equal concentrations diphenyl-chloroarsine is more poisonous than phosgene."

Chloropicrin

Chloropicrin, nitrochloroform CCl_3NO_2, is produced from simple industrial products: picric acid, which is both an explosive and a dye, bleaching powder, and steam. The Germans began to use this "gas" against the Italians in the spring of 1917 and its peculiar properties of being a lachrymator and also causing vomiting, resulted in a large number of casualties due to men removing their masks in the presence of more deadly gases. It also caused serious trouble because while the early gas masks safely filtered out chlorine and phosgene, chloropicrin passed through!

Chloropicrin is an oil which boils at 112° C. Its persistency is intermediate between the gas, phosgene, and the high-boiling liquid, mustard gas. It is used only in shell or in hand grenades. The Germans used a shell containing superpalite and chloropicrin in the ratio of 3 to 1. It is also mixed with about 20% metallic tetrachlorides, which form a dense smoke cloud. Chloropicrin is volatile enough to keep the air above it thoroughly poisonous, and yet it is persistent enough to be dangerous after five or six hours. An idea of its effectiveness is obtained when we realize that at

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concentrations between 2 and 25 parts per million, there is an irresistible impulse to close the eyes within three to thirty seconds.

4. VESICANTS

We spoke above about how man's sensitive zones were sought out and attacked one after another: first his lungs, then his eyes, then his nose and throat and finally his skin. Chemicals for use against the skin are called vesicants. His skin was the last to be attacked, but the ability to attack it has presented more advantages and problems than all the other chemicals combined. His lungs and eyes, nose and throat could be protected by a good gas mask. How could his skin be protected? There are only two important gases in this class: mustard gas and Lewisite. The latter, discovered by an American professor, was a dead secret at the end of the war, but the English "spilled the beans" in the *Journal of the Chemical Society*, and so the story has come out.

Mustard Gas

Mustard gas, the most important vesicant, is also known as Yperite because it was first used by the Germans at Ypres in July, 1917. It is "the King of Gases." Chemically it is dichloro-ethyl sulphide $(CH_2ClCH_2)_2S$, a liquid of high boiling point (216° C) and very low vapor pressure, which explains its great persistency. Mustard gas is effective in low concentrations, has very little odor, and the victim has no immediate sign of discomfort or danger. It remains on the ground and in low places for days, and causes huge casualties. Indeed, it produced nearly eight times more Allied casualties (not deaths) than all the other kinds of gas put together. Its deadly effects could be prevented by wearing a gas mask, and during the war only a very small proportion of the tremendous total of mustard gas casualties were fatal.

Production. The Germans used a much more difficult series of reactions to produce mustard gas than the method finally adopted by the Americans. The latter required only the simplest raw materials, namely alcohol, sulphur and chlorine. The French were the only Allied forces who actually succeeded in producing it in time to use it on the western front. However, the Germans used rivers of it—it is calculated, for instance, that in ten days in the autumn of 1917, a million shells were fired, containing 2,500 tons of mustard gas. Had the war lasted just a little longer, America would have been able to deliver vast quantities in France.

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Physiological action. The chief property of mustard gas is its ability to cause severe blistering and burning of the skin, even through clothing, in either the vapor or the liquid form. As little as one part in 14,000,000 is capable of causing conjunctivitis (severe inflammation) of the eye, while one part in 3,000,000 and possibly one part in 5,000,000 will cause a skin burn in a sensitive person on long exposure. Horses and dogs which are used in warfare are also harmed by the gas. The damage to man is explained thus: the mustard gas penetrates the cells of the skin, and is then hydrolyzed by the water in the cell to hydrochloric (muriatic) acid, which causes intense irritation and the formation of deep and painful blisters. These wounds heal very slowly. Wherever there is moisture from perspiration, as under the arm-pits and in the crotch, mustard gas attacks most easily. Yet dispite its terrible severity, mustard gas has considerable *delay action.* It has no immediate action even on the eyes or throat, but seven hours afterward the victim will be absolutely blind.

Besides its vesicant properties, mustard gas is one of the most poisonous of all war gases. Thus a concentration of only 0.05 milligrams per liter will kill a dog, while 0.8 milligrams of chloropicrin or 3.0 milligrams of chlorine would be necessary. In the last war, most of the mustard gas casualties were burns caused by the vapor. But in the next its terrible toxic effects will be more fully utilized by placing a large charge of high explosive in the shell, which will spread it about as a very fine spray. Thus the victim can draw into his lungs in one or two breaths enough to kill himself. This type of shell was very effectively used by the Germans in the last months of the war.

Lewisite

Although this compound was never actually used in the war, its properties are such that it is worth describing. It was produced by the action of acetylene or arsenic trichloride in the presence of aluminum chloride. This reaction produces three compounds, one of which ,chloro-vinyl-dichloro-arsine $CHCl{:}CH.AsCl_2$, is almost as powerful a vesicant as mustard gas. It also irritates the respiratory tract and causes violent sneezing. Unlike mustard gas it is absorbed through the skin, and as a result of its arsenic content is very poisonous. Three drops placed on the stomach of a mouse are said to cause death in from one to three hours. General Fries, suggesting its use in airplane bombs, called it "The Dew of Death."

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Lessons of the Russian Revolution

By Alex Bittelman

TO ATTEMPT to derive and formulate the lessons of the Russian Revolution means to analyze the meaning, the paths and the methods of the historic struggles of the toiling masses of Russia in one of the greatest social revolutions that ever occurred. In fact, it means to analyze the meaning and formulate the lessons of the *first* working class revolution in the history of society, an event which ushered in the period of the world social revolution which is destined to wipe capitalism off the face of the earth and to establish the classless society of communism.

Obviously, such a task cannot be successfully accomplished within the limits of a magazine article. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the more modest task of formulating the central and most fundamental lessons of the Russian Revolution which the workers of other countries are already assimilating and applying to their own struggles against capitalism.

A COMPLETE VINDICATION OF MARXISM-LENINISM

It is universally agreed, even in the camp of the enemies of the working class, that the social eruption which occurred in November, 1917, in what was formerly known as the empire of the Russian Czar was an event of tremendous world significance. Even those who were inclined, because of ignorance or class hatred, to treat the November Revolution as a peculiarly and exclusively Russian phenomenon which cannot repeat itself in the more "civilized" countries of Western Europe and America, have by this time arrived at somewhat different conclusions. On its Tenth Anniversary the Russian Revolution stands out clearly and unmistakably as the *first* proletarian revolution marking the opening of a new period in the world's history, the period of the proletarian social revolution.

The basic factor which made the proletarian revolution in Russia not only inevitable but also possible and successful in November, 1917, was the extremely critical situation of world capitalism during that period, the prevalence of an immediate revolutionary situation.

What was the basic cause of this world revolutionary situation?

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It was the actual working out of those social forces which are operating within the framework of modern imperialism and which determine its development. The late world imperialist war which was the chief *immediate* factor in bringing about the revolutionary situation of those days, was in itself no accident due merely to the evil designs of the Kaiser or of Lord Grey. The late world imperialist war, the armed clash between the two gigantic capitalist combinations, was merely the culminating point of a process of imperialist rivalries and conflicts which was motivated by the very substance of present day capitalism—the capitalism of the era of imperialism.

To many this may not have been very clear prior to, during and even immediately after the late world imperialist war. But today, in the light of the world's history in the last decade, the truth of this analysis stands beyond any questioning or doubt. In the light of the acute imperialist conflicts and numerous armed local clashes which characterized the development of world capitalism since the infamous days of the treaty of Versailles, in the light of the ominous struggle for world domination between the declining imperialism of Great Britain and the new contender for world mastery—the United States—and in the face of the projected consolidation of world imperialism against the Chinese Revolution and the Soviet Union initiated and pressed forward by British imperialism, it becomes conclusively evident that the proletarian revolution in Russia in November, 1917, and its progressive strengthening and successful building of socialism since, were possible only because of the specific nature of the conditions of development of capitalism in the phase of imperialism—the last phase in the development of world capitalism.

THE FALSE THEORIES OF SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

Capitalist apologists quite naturally shrink from facing this cardinal Leninist truth which is borne out so conclusively by world developments during the last decade and of which the Russian Revolution constitutes the central point. The leaders of international social-democracy as well as the trade union reformists, who at present constitute one of the chief factors for the temporary stabilization of capitalism, are trying desperately to prevent the workers in their respective countries from assimilating this Leninist truth. The European reformists are building theory after theory

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to perpetuate the fiction that the Soviet Union is some sort of an unfortunate accident whose repetition in "civilized" Europe is not only undesirable but also impossible. Of this nature are the futile and bankrupt theories of Hilferding and Company that the trustification of international capital and the development of the League of Nations tend to weaken imperialist rivalries and contradictions thus ushering in a new period of "peaceful" capitalist development, whereas as a matter of plain fact these developments are sharpening still further and are rendering more insoluble the contradictions of capitalism, thus bringing nearer the day of its final doom.

Moved by the same impulse as their European brethren, that is by the fear that the working class of the capitalist countries will accept the Russian Revolution for what it has proved to be—the forerunner and torchbearer of the world proletarian revolution,—the American reformists also are developing theories of exemption and absolution. American reformism, however, is not as ambitious as its European prototype. The apologists of American capitalism are satisfied for the present, at least, to leave the fate of Europe hang in the balance, concentrating upon the exemption of the United States from the inevitability of a proletarian revolution along the lines of the November revolution in Russia. To this end we have been presented with the very superficial but at the same time extremely ambitious theories of Professor Carver, who undertakes to "prove" that class divisions in the United States are disappearing (mind you, in the United States), that the workers are becoming capitalists and the capitalists are becoming workers and that this new social order is being ushered in bloodlessly and without class struggle through the wide door of workers' savings, employe stock ownership, labor banks, etc. Closely related to and partly based upon this "epoch-making" theory of our ambitious professor are the significant philosophies of the American trade union reactionaries such as the "Higher Strategy of Labor," for which a truer name would have been "The Higher Strategy for *Betraying* Labor," or the so-called New Wage Policy which was reaffirmed and further developed to suit the capitalists at the Los Angeles convention of the American Federation of Labor, as well as the entire system of class collaboration which is undermining and sapping the life of the American labor movement. This intense ideological crystallization of reformism in the United States, which has as its basis the stupendous growth of American imperialism and the resulting corruption of

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the upper strata of the working class, is prompted chiefly by the fear of the lessons of the Russian Revolution, among them the lesson that the American working class must not only study Russia but also prepare to follow its example.

In this outstanding lesson of the Russian Revolution, namely, that it is conditioned by the fundamental crisis of the last phase of world capitalism and that in its turn it further aggravates this crisis and constitutes the basic factor for the further promotion of the world revolution, is the established fact that it is possible to achieve the victory of socialism in one country. This also is a basic Leninist truth, derived from a Marxian analysis of the nature of capitalism in the era of imperialism, *i. e.*, the final phase of capitalism, which is characterized by extreme unevenness of development, sporadic and violent changes, extreme sharpening of imperialist conflicts and the recurrence of periodic imperialist wars. It is this condition of imperialism which crowned with success the struggle for power of the working class of Russia and which is making possible the building and victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union.

THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM IN ONE COUNTRY

To appreciate fully the dynamic force and revolutionizing power of this lesson of the Russian Revolution, that it is possible to achieve the victory of Socialism in a country ruled by the dictatorship of the proletariat and surrounded by capitalist states, provided the dictatorship is not destroyed by the armed intervention of the capitalist states, one must consider the persistent and violent campaign of agitation of the capitalists and the reformists to the effect that the Soviet Union is not building socialism. Clearly the object of this campaign is to undermine the faith of the workers of the capitalist countries in the ability of the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union to build and complete the building of Socialism. The thing that is feeding this campaign against the possibility of the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union is the very important fact that the achievements of the Soviet Union have proven the correctness of Leninism on this point and that the truth is becoming known to and is inspiring the struggles of ever wider sections of the toiling masses in the capitalist countries.

There was a time when the capitalists and the reformers were concentrating on "proving" that the seizure of power by the workers of Russia was a temporary and passing event brought about by the

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backwardness and barbarism of Russia. This was at the time when civil war in Russia was at its height, when the armies of foreign imperialism were battering the gates of the workers' republic in a desperate effort to destroy the proletarian dictatorship. The fortunes of the revolution were hanging in the balance. It was during that period that the capitalist world, trembling for its fate on the edge of a precipice, was consoling itself with the hope that the revolution in Russia would not last. But when the Russian Revolution began to prove its lasting qualities, its tremendous powers of resistance to capitalist intervention and its great force of appeal to the toiling masses of the world, capitalist and reformist agitation against the Russian Revolution took a different turn. The refrain of the new capitalist tune was the misery, hunger and starvation of the Russian masses. The military and economic *cordon* around Russia maintained by the capitalist powers in that period was supplemented by the ideological *cordon* of terrifying pictures of conditions in Russia. The capitalist and reformist agitation was, of course, blaming all this misery on the revolution, without ever indicating the truth that the responsibility for that condition rested mainly on the disastrous effects of the world war brought about by imperialism, the ruinous effects of the counter-revolution inside and outside of Russia, the policy of economic boycott and strangulation pursued then by the imperialist powers against the revolution, and the terrific inheritance of poverty, misery and destruction left over by the old regime of the landlords, capitalists and the Czar. However, this campaign of terrifying the toiling masses in the capitalist countries by the "frightful" example of Russia was going on merrily for a time until the next phase of the revolution began to make its appearance. We refer here to the period beginning with the introduction of the New Economic Policy which opened up the present—the latest—phase of the successful building of Socialism in the Soviet Union. The so-called ideological campaign of the capitalists and reformists against the Russian Revolution from then on was being devoted mainly to one proposition, namely, to convince the masses in the capitalist countries that the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union cannot and will not build up a Socialist order of society. At the present time this is the chief "argument" of the reformists and labor reactionaries all over the world. The enemies of the proletarian revolution seem to realize that by undermining the faith

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of the toiling masses in the possibility of the victory of Socialism in the Soviet Union, or in any other country that may succeed in establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat in capitalist surroundings, they will have dealt a vital blow to the world revolutionary movement generally. It is partly for this reason that the struggle against the opposition in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which denies this Leninist fundamental and which rejects this lesson of the Russian Revolution, is of such vital importance for the entire Communist International.

THE PATHS AND METHODS OF REVOLUTION

Chief among the questions relating to the paths and methods of the proletarian revolution is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat with the Soviet form of government as its concrete state manifestation, this being the only means of overthrowing the rule of capital and of building socialism as a transition to communism, has been fully vindicated by the experiences of the Soviet Union and stands out as one of the great lessons of the Russian Revolution. What does the Soviet form of government disclose as to its actual meaning and nature when examined on the basis of its practical workings? It served as the organ of mobilizing and unifying the revolutionary forces of the working class for the destruction of the capitalist state and the abolition of the rule of capital. It organized the working class as the state power of Russia. It enabled the working class to suppress the counter-revolution within, to repulse the capitalist attacks from without and to defend successfully the revolution. It is perfectly obvious that without the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the Soviet government as its concrete form of state, none of these things would have been possible.

There is, moreover, another angle to this question relating more to the role of the proletarian dictatorship in the maintenance of working class rule and in the process of the actual building of a socialist economy. It is that angle of it which shows the dictatorship of the proletariat as the particular form of alliance between the working class and the exploited sections of the farmers and the lower middle groups which enables the former to exercise leadership over the latter in the common struggle against capitalism, and through which the working class is able to link up the socialized industries with agriculture in the building of a national socialist

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economy. The New Economic Policy outlines the central measures by which this process is carried on. An examination of the actual state of economics today in the Soviet Union will show how this process is successfully proceeding, by means of the proletarian dictatorship which is pursuing the New Economic Policy, resulting in the steady growth and expansion of the elements of socialist economy predominating over those of private economy, thus continually strengthening the socialist base of the Soviet Union and improving the conditions of the toiling masses.

A HIGHER TYPE OF PROLETARIAN DEMOCRACY

At a time when President Green of the A. F. of L. has the audacity to condemn the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union in the same breath that he "also" condemns the fascist rule of Mussolini, it is very essential to emphasize that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a *higher* type of democracy in a society which is divided into classes. The proletarian dictatorship is a working class democracy, which expresses the interests of the overwhelming majority of the exploited masses and where the actual operation of the governmental machinery becomes accessible to an ever-increasing number of workers and poor farmers. Even the correspondent of the *New York Times* cannot help but admire the numerous conferences and congresses of women, peasants and workers through which millions of toilers get access to, training in and actual operation of govermental machinery in the Soviet Union. Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois political writers in the United States have long been discussing the limitations and failures of democracy. The former with a view of passing over to a more open and direct governmental form of capitalist dictatorship, the latter undoubtedly prompted by the futility of some of the efforts of small capital against big capital through the existing political channels. What they were actually discussing is capitalist democracy, which is a governmental form of capitalist class dictatorship and in which the actual operation of government is in the hands of the capitalists and their trusted servants.

In the experiences of the Russian Revolution, through all the various phases of its development, the leading role of the working class, what Lenin called the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution, stands out most prominently. This Leninist principle of the leading role of the proletariat in the struggle against capi-

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talism was most skilfully and effectively applied in the Russian Revolution with the result that the tenth anniversary of the revolution finds the Soviet Union powerfully entrenched, the alliance between the working class and the poor and middle peasantry firmly cemented and the working class successfully leading the toiling masses towards socialism.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Closely connected with the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the working class in the revolution is the question of the role of the Communist Party. What are the lessons of the Russian Revolution in this respect? They are, first, that it is through the Party that the working class is exercising its hegemony in the revolution as well as the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without the leadership of the Communist Party the working class could not capture power nor establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. Second, that the revolutionary political party of the working class, the Communist Party, is the highest form of working class organization concentrating and directing the struggles of the working class as a class and leading the activities of all the other working class organizations, unions, cooperatives, etc. Hence, the building of a powerful mass Communist Party in the capitalist countries becomes, in the light of the lessons of the Russian Revolution, the most vital task of the working class.

* * *

The Tenth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution brings closer to us than ever before the tremendous importance and significance of the Soviet Union for the liberation struggle of the toiling masses all over the world from the rule and oppression of capitalism. We see in the Soviet Union not only the greatest achievement of the oppressed in the history of the class struggle, not only the demonstrated possibility of the victory of Socialism in one country with a proletarian dictatorship functioning in capitalist surroundings, but also the most powerful factor undermining world capitalism and promoting the world revolution. The Soviet Union constitutes, therefore, the dearest and most valuable possession of the working class of the world.

In the present international situation, when world imperialism again maneuvres for an open attack upon the Soviet Union the same as against the Chinese Revolution, there is no task more

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urgent and vital than this preparation of the toiling masses throughout the world for the defense of the Soviet Union. The growing danger of war and of a consolidated attack of the big imperialist powers against the Soviet Union must be brought home to the widest sections of the toiling masses of the United States for the purpose of preparing them ideologically and organizationally for effective struggle against these machinations of world imperialism participated in by the imperialists of the United States.

An examination of the lessons of the Russian Revolution, particularly from the angle of the present phase in the development of the class struggle in the United States, will inevitably bring our party to the realization of the fact that it must increase its efforts manifold in the struggle for independent working class political action through a Labor Party, that the campaign for the organization of the unorganized and for the building of the left wing in the trade unions must be prosecuted with the utmost energy and devotion, that a merciless struggle must be carried on against all phases of reformism and class collaboration, that the struggle against American imperialism must be extended and intensified and by these means proceed with the building of a powerful mass Communist Party in the United States worthy and able to prepare and lead the American working class in the struggle against capitalism to final victory.

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Ten Years of Building Socialism

By J. Mindel

THE October Revolution placed power in the hands of the working class. For the first time in history, the oppressed and economically enslaved classes gained their liberty. But November 7th was only a prelude to the struggles ahead. The capitalists and the nobility, Germany and the Allies, all, in their time, made every attempt to crush the Proletarian State.

The first respite the Soviet government received after the treaty of Brest, and the defeat of Kornilov and the other counter-revolutionary bands, came early in 1918. "The main task of every Socialist revolution, after victory over its enemies is gained, is to build a higher social order. This can be realized only through raising the productivity of labor and by creating higher organizational forms than those existing under capitalism."

"To raise the productivity of labor, we must first of all secure the basis of large industry; develop the production of fuel and iron, of the chemical and technical industries. . . . Soviet Russia is rich in natural resources. The development of these resources, the application of new methods of production, will give us the basis for an undreamed-of development of the productive forces."

The cultural level of the population must be raised. This is taking place rapidly. The active participation of the proletarians and poor peasantry in the task of building up the country must be insured.

These were the tasks of the Soviet Power formulated by Lenin in April, 1918.

The Revolution could not attend immediately to these tasks. The Revolution itself, the political gains of the October revolution, had to be defended. The imperialist powers bent all their energies to crushing the Soviet Republic, the Allies sent their armies into the Soviet Union, armed and supported Koltchak, Deniken, Yudenich, and Wrangel. They also armed and financed the Polish campaign against Russia.

The working class and the peasantry defended their liberties and their political and economic freedom. They would not allow the capitalists and the nobility to enslave them again. The burdens

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and hardships of this struggle were borne by the workers and peasantry. The victory of the Soviet power over the Allies and counter-revolutionists was accomplished with the aid the peasantry gave to the working class. It gave the Red Army its sons, to the city and factory it gave bread.

From the time of the October Revolution until the end of the year 1920, the capitalist powers gave the workers' state no peace. The French government persuaded Czecho-Slovak troops in Siberia to attack a number of towns. The United States and Japan supplied contingents for the inter-Allied force which seized Vladivostok; British and American troops occupied Archangel, in the north of European Russia; the Germans attacked from the Ukraine; the Cossack chief, Krasnov, with the help of Germany, moved north from the Don; the Poles, under the direction of France, attacked in Western Ukraine.

PERIOD OF MILITARY COMMUNISM

It was during this period that the Soviet Government, attacked on every side by its enemies, its industries in a state of collapse, found it imperative to inaugurate what is known as the policy of military communism. The two chief features of this policy were, first, complete centralization of distribution by the government, and, second, the system of collecting food for the cities by means of requisitions from the peasants.

The enemies of the Socialist Republic seek to paint the system of military communism in Russia as a policy desired by the government. That it was only a military necessity, forced upon the Soviet Union by war and intervention, these enemies conveniently forgot.

Russia at the end of the world war was in economic ruin. The counter-revolutionary bands stole all they could. Whatever they could not carry off, they demolished and ruined. The country had to be rebuilt economically, and in the shortest period of time. The genius of Lenin saw the way, and he blazed the path of reconstruction. "Our poverty and ruin is such that we cannot immediately establish large State Socialist Factory Production. For this production it is necessary to have large stocks of grain and fuel in the great industrial centers, and to replace the worn-out machinery by new machinery. Experience has convinced us that this cannot be done all at once. And we know that after the destruc-

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tion caused by the imperialist war, even the richest and most advanced countries can solve this problem only during the course of a long period of time. This means that it is necessary to a certain extent to assist the reestablishment of small industry, which does not require machinery, which does no require large government stocks of raw material, fuel and food, and which can immediately give certain assistance to agriculture, and raise its productivity."[1]

From 1917 to 1921, the working class of Russia under the leadership of the Communist Party proved its superior force, its organizational ability, its devotion and its heroism in defending the revolution. Since 1921 the proletarians of the Soviet Union have been victoriously rebuilding the country and building up socialism. The rapid achievements of the Soviet government on the economic field are made possible through the close union of the workers and peasants.

The participation of private capital in trade and in small industry gave a strong impetus to the economic life of the country. This added to the economic resources of the country. There is no danger of private capital getting the upper hand in the economic life of the Soviet Union or becoming a drawback in the building up of the socialist economy of the country; as long as the political power is in the hands of the working class, the state control of large industry, credit and trade, the state ownership of transportation and natural resources ensures the growth of socialism.

ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

Up to 1924 the economic reconstruction proceeded at a slow pace. Since 1924, the development has been rapid. The rapidity of industrial reconstruction can be gleaned from the following table:

Production in millions of pre-war rubles[2]

1923-24[3]	3,414
1924-25	5,039
1925-26	6,923
1926-27	7,855

[1] N. Lenin: *The Meaning of the Agricultural Tax*, p. 24.

[2] Kuybishev. *Industrialization.*

[3] The fiscal year in the U. S. S. R. begins Oct. 1 and ends Sept. 30.

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Not only do we see an enormous increase in quantity, but the quality of the production is changing. The Soviet Union is rapidly increasing the production of machinery.

The production of tools and machinery has increased 30% above the pre-war level and that of agricultural machinery 42%. New fields, entirely absent in Czarist Russia, are now being entered into. Chemicals, agricultural machinery and implements, automobiles and airplanes, are being manufactured.

The Soviet Government has proved in the few years that it *has* been left alone that it can peacefully build the economic life of the country, and it builds rapidly without the waste and anarchy accompanying capitalist economy. It can be done more quickly if loans are secured from the rich capitalist countries. Our own capitalists will lend money to Fascist Italy, will strangle the German workers with its Dawes plan, and will support reactionary Poland, because they look for concessions and an opportunity to plunder the riches of the country.

The Soviet Government will not allow a Dawes plan, will not let the natural resources of the country be stolen and is therefore boycotted by finance capital. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union is going ahead and is increasing its production steadily, with its own resources. To extend the existing plants and build new ones the Soviet government invested in the year 1925-26, 780 million rubles, in 1926-27 947 million rubles, in 1927-28 1,183 (estimated).

Notwithstanding the fact that Soviet industry reached the pre-war level and in some instances went beyond that level, the growing needs of the country cannot as yet be satisfied. It is necessary to extend the plans in operation and to build new ones. The building program for the coming year is enlarged, and the needs of the future have been taken into consideration. The Fourth Congress of the Soviets in formulating the economic program states in its resolution: "For the future, the efforts of the Soviet Government must be directed to insuring a more rapid development of the fixed-capital in industry, to reconstructing the national economy on a higher technical basis, which would make it possible in the shortest

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historic period to reach and overtake the industrial level of the most advanced capitalist countries."

ELECTRIFICATION IN THE SOVIET UNION

The basis for future industry is electrification. Electrification of industry makes its socialization easier. Much attention is paid to the development of this "white power" in the Soviet Union. The resources of water-power are unlimited and development of electric energy will play a great part in the near future in the Soviet economy. As in all phases of struggle and economic reconstruction, Lenin was the first to call attention to this task. "When we will have built tens of local and regional stations (we know by now where and how to build) and transmitted their energy to every village; when we acquire enough motors and other machinery, no transition periods will be required, or will hardly be required!"

In 1913, there were in Czarist Russia 230 local and 550 industrial stations with a capacity of 780,000; in 1927 there are 360 local, 550 regional and 820 industrial stations with a capacity of 1,730,000 kilowatts. It is expected that in 1927-28, the large regional public utility stations will produce 2,070,000 kw., a gain of 45% over 1926-27, or three times the total of 1913.

To achieve real results in this field, time is required, but the slogan raised by Lenin will be adhered to and the task laid down, carried out, by the Soviet government and the All-Union Communist Party.

II Agriculture

THE agricultural population in the Soviet Union is on the upgrade. In capitalist countries the agricultural population is governed by laws of capitalist economy; it is exploited through the middle-man, trusts, banks, high tariffs, etc. In the Soviet Union, the government takes the same care of the peasant as of the worker, and constantly promotes the interests of the farmer. In the capitalist countries, the poor farmer is ruined and turned out of his farm altogether. The policy of the Soviet Government is to support the small farmer and help the peasant population in every possible way. Relief from taxation, credit unions, cooperatives, improved machinery, model farms, help the peasants to increase his income.

The agricultural development kept pace with the industrial. In

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pre-war rubles, the agricultural production was in millions of rubles:

1913	10,947,7[4]
1924	7,652,2
1925	9,662,6
1926	10,463,4

Cereal production was somewhat lower than in 1913, but the production of cattle reached 104% and the production of raw materials 98%. Special attention is being paid to the production of raw materials. Importation of raw materials is one of the causes of high prices, e. g., the importation of cotton from the United States. Productive cooperatives are being promoted in all branches of agriculture. Cooperative agriculture is distributed over the wide area of the Soviet Union and is heartily supported by the Soviet government.

GROWTH OF FARM COOPERATIVES

On the first of October, 1926, there were 55,000 agricultural cooperatives with over 6,000,000 members. About 30% of all farms belong to these cooperatives. They are divided into credit unions, general farming, and cooperatives that specialize in producing one or two articles.

The agricultural cooperatives are supported in every way. The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party recommended a long string of measures to stabilize and promote agricultural cooperatives. Among the measures recommended are: "that the factories get their raw materials through the cooperatives; (2) that the peasantry be provided with machinery and implements through the cooperatives; (3) that the cooperatives participate in the importation of agricultural machinery and other necessities and participate in the export of agricultural products." These measures tend to socialize agriculture and lead to the abandonment of petty individual farming, laying the broad basis for socialist economy in agriculture.

Trading cooperatives grow rapidly in the city and country. Their membership grows, methods of trading are being constantly improved and their part in the socialization of distribution becomes more important from day to day.

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[4]Savelev: *Our Achievements.*

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The number of societies, stores and the membership grew in the following manner:

Year	1914	1924	1925	1926
Societies	12,361	22,621	25,536	27,438
Stores		37,129	50,961	57,719
Membership	2,000,000	7,097,447	9,347,303	11,401,708

After the introduction of the new economic policy, Lenin laid much stress on the cooperatives. "At present we must translate into deed the consciousness that the social form we support at present above all, is the cooperative form. It must be supported with great effort. But we do not mean that every cooperative enterprise must be supported; we must understand that our support must be primarily carried to these cooperatives in which the real masses of our people actually participate. A society of civilized cooperatives, when the means of production are socialized and the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie is won—is the socialist form of society."[5] The gains in trade and the groups that participated in carrying on the trade can be gleaned from the following table:

I—*Wholesale Trade in Million Chervonetz*

Year ending	1924	%	1925	%	1926	%	1927	%
State	2,459	52.1	3,500	51.5	5,100	48.6	6,304	49
Co-operative	1,235	26.1	2,651	39	4,382	41.2	5,406	42
Private	1,030	21.8	644	9.5	981	9.4	1,159	9

II—*Retail Trade in Million Chervonetz*

Year ending	1924	%	1925	%	1926	%	1927	%
State	566	11.3	1,355	19.6	1,784	17.5	1,992	17
Co-operative	1,515	30.1	2,486	36.1	4,370	43.2	5,452	47.5
Private	2,946	58.6	3,056	44.3	3,879	39.3	4,087	35.5

III—*Total Trade of the Soviet Union in Million Chervonetz*

Year ending	1924	%	1925	%	1926	%	1927	%
State	3,025	31	4,855	35.5	6,954	35	8,296	39
Co-operative	2,750	28.2	5,137	37.5	8,654	43	10,858	44
Private	3,976	40.8	3,700	27	4,860	24	5,296	22

THE WORKERS AND THE SOVIET INDUSTRY

In comparison with the pre-war period there were occupied in registered industry: in 1921-22, 48% of workers with a productivity of 22%; in 1922-23, 54%, with a productivity of 32%; in 1923-24, 62%, with a productivity of 41%; in 1924-25, 70%, with a

[5]Lenin: On Cooperation, 1923.

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productivity of 66%; in 1925-26, 95%, with a productivity of 89%; 1926-27, 106%, with a productivity of 103%.

The workers in Soviet factories participate actively in the management of the industry. The trades unions grow and a policy is being pursued that every worker must be in a trade union. In 1927, over 9,000,000 workers were organized in the unions of the Soviet Republic.

The wages of the workers are being steadily increased. Vacations, social insurance, care of the workers' health, and living conditions constantly improve. Women workers have the same rights economically, politically and culturally, as men.

The achievement of the Soviet industry in the past four or five years is without precedent. The pre-war level was reached in 1927, and in many instances larger results were gained.

The broadening of industry, the development of larger plants and better methods of production, is on the order of the day. The cooperation of the broad masses of the workers and peasants with the Soviet Government is secure. The role of large and small capitalists of the city and country in the economic life of the Soviet Union is on the decline. The growth of the nationalized industry, of the cooperatives, of culture and general well-being, assures a healthy growth of the Soviet Socialist Republic to a higher state of society, to the socialist state. The power of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat makes that growth secure.

The only real danger to the continued growth of socialism in the Soviet Union is the danger of a new imperialist attack upon it. This the working class of the world must prevent. If war comes in spite of our efforts, then the workers of the world must defend the Soviet Union.

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BOOKS

America's Coming of Age

RISE OF AMERICAN CIVILIZATION. By CHARLES and MARY BEARD. Macmillan. 2 vols. $12.50.

MAIN CURRENTS IN AMERICAN THOUGHT. By V. L. PARRINGTON. Harcourt, Brace. 2 vols. $4.00 each.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. WOLFE

AMERICA is coming of age. One of the signs of maturity is a growing self-consciousness. At the very moment when America's life of external activity seems to take on even greater intensity, the close observer can perceive a slowing up in its rate of acceleration and the beginning of inner activity, of introspection, of consciousness of self.

In the youth of America, there was such a big continent to occupy, so many trees to be felled and roads to be built and rivers to bridge, so much riches to extract from the earth, so much land to till, so many factories to be set up, that there was little leisure for a life of the spirit. Now "we" have leaped the pond on both sides, have colonies, foreign affairs and world empire. America is still busy with construction and external activity, still extending the sphere of activity, still rushing round and leading a strenuous life, but a little softening of the muscles is evident, a little tendency to corpulence, and storing up of fatty tissue, a little tendency to contemplate, to reflect, to question.

A rentier class is developing in America, an idle leisure class with nothing to do but cultivate the "art of living" so that that art should seem to have as little as possible to do with the productive processes that are the real foundations of life.

Wealth is flowing into America from all the ends of the earth—wealth not created by American productive activity but taken from the product of the toil of Cuban *colonos*, Mexican peons, or European industrial workers.

Art objects are flowing into America. Napoleon tramped through Europe robbing ancient art treasures from many lands by force of arms. We are more "respectable" in our methods, but we strip the older countries cleaner. Our millionaires may not be able to "appreciate" art but they know what the world appreciates by the price that is set on it and they are in a position to be the highest bidders. So false art values and true in motley procession stream to America under the pull of the magnetic dollar, as do singers and dancers and "art theatres" and lecturers and *swamis*.

With such a stream of inflowing cultures coming after the stream of inflowing peoples has begun to slow up; with such a growth of wealth, with an end of all-absorbing pioneer activity and the development of a

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leisure class, an authentic culture is bound to develop—culture and self-consciousness.

One of the signs of consciousness of self is self-criticism. Spoon River and Winesburg, Main Street and Babbit and Elmer Gantry, the verse of Sandburg and the prose of Upton Sinclair, Bunk and Revelry and even the bumptious bellyaching of Mencken are so many straws showing which way the wind is beginning to blow—and there are many more straws.

Another sign of the growth of self-consciousness is the growing interest in the past, in the development of America's inner life. There is a veritable epidemic of biographies, and many of them become best sellers. They are critical biographies too—histories of great American bucaneers like Vanderbilt, Morgan, Astor, Fisk and Gould; iconoclastic life stories of Washington and Hamilton and Grant. Margaret Fuller and Calamity Jane, Barnum and Brigham Young, Henry Ward Beecher and Cotton Mather, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Paine, all compete with the latest Tarkington hero or Atherton heroine with a fair chance of getting at least a survivor's medal on the *Bookman's* "Monthly Score."

"Non-fictions" begin to be best sellers and there is a market for "outlines" of everything.

The times are ripe for an intellectual or cultural history of America and we are not surprised to be offered suddenly not one but two of them—and both of merit.

Parrington's' "Main Currents in American Thought" (Volumes one and two of a three-volume series) and Charles and Mary Beard's two-volume "Rise of American Civilization" were written by authors who did not know apparently of their simultaneous work on similar themes and both published within a few weeks of each other. Once more an illustration of the familiar law that when the times are socially ripe for the birth of a new idea it is in the air and any "aerial" can tune in, more or less imperfectly or perfectly according to the fineness of the "set."

Both works are well worth reading and any one interested in the understanding of American history and of the development of American thought and institutions will find that both repay study.

Beard at His Best

The Beard book is Beard at his best (or should I say the Beards?). It is the ripe fruit of a life of historical study. The chapter on the constitution is a compression and simplification of a whole volume on "The Economic Interpretation of the Constitution." The chapter on Jefferson is a distillation of the studies on Jefferson. The chapter on the Civil War is particularly noteworthy.

How much Mary Beard had to do with the work is not clear but it seems apparent that the emphasis on the role played by women and the chapters on labor history are largely her work, as well, no doubt, as much of the sections dealing with American culture.

There is much bad "fine writing" in the book. For instance, none of the great personages are permitted to die but "long shadows fall" on them instead. (It is only chivalry which prevents me from suggesting that the

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"feminine touch" might be responsible for that, for Beard never wrote that way before.)

The present history has many of the weaknesses of Beard's earlier historical volumes but there are many changes for the better. The work is riper, many gaps in historical knowledge have been filled in, the vulgar "economic determinism" of some of his earlier work yields to a somewhat better application of historical materialism.

The attempts to analyze the cultural developments of each period in terms of social currents and forces is what is really new so far as this historian is concerned. Unfortunately the authors "go through the motions" rather than really doing the job. Social forces are viewed superficially and not penetrated. Connections are hinted at rather than made. The "cultural" or ideological portions do not form one piece with the economic and political history but are rather tacked on. It is as if a bungling watch-maker had taken apart the clock of history to understand it and putting it together again found more parts than he knew what to do with and just threw them in when wrapping up the package.

It is not one history but two or several; not a monistic grasping of the relation of ideas to social forces but, often, a lifeless parallellism of two mechanically separate streams.

At times the Beards reveal with startling obviousness the myopia with which liberalism is affected, especially in the latter period of war and post-war developments. Here Fascism and Bolshevism are "found" to have common aims; proletarian dictatorship becomes proletarian "despotism," and the development towards imperialism and domination of finance capital in the last decade of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century is absurdly described as development "towards social democracy," because there were some fake pretenses at railroad rate regulation, at anti-trust laws (which have dissolved the Standard Oil Company without the company's ever noticing it), at social legislation (in which we lag behind all other industrially advanced countries), at conservation of natural resources (after almost everything worth having was stolen or thrown away), and of Roosevelt noise and Wilson wordiness. While we move towards plutocracy at a dizzying rate, Beard examines the feeble resistance or mere signs of passive friction or drag, and calls it movement "toward social democracy."

American Culture in Review

Louis Vernon Parrington is professor of English in the University of Washington. Judging from the two volumes of "Main Currents in American Thought" he is a Marxian strongly steeped in Jeffersonian prejudices. But his use of the Marxian method in spite of its dilution has produced a work that deserves to last and become part of the mental equipment of every one who would understand American history and the American mind. The Buckles and Drapers and Leckys that did not grasp the process of history could not do for old world civilization what Parrington's book does for America. He sets out to study the history of American ideas but because he perceives the relation of ideas to class forces and economic development he

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gives a truer insight into these than Beard, the social and political historian. In place of parallelism, ideology and political and economic history are all of a single piece. Pieces are not glued nor even riveted together but fused into a single whole.

There are shortcomings, moments of one-sidedness, gaps, mistakes, but in big things small flaws are less important, and this is a big work.

Of course, Parrington has not yet had to stand the critical test of the modern period where the historian has to be less "detached" and has more openly to take sides, since the two volumes go only as far as 1860. Yet these two volumes give promise of a not unsatisfactory final one. The third volume will show what manner of man this Parrington really is and will give us more information about the period just preceding our own, in which we ourselves are trying to write the latest chapters. I think we can make current history better if we know what went before and what we inherit—if we know what to reject or what to use and fashion to the needs of our times and class. Both the works reviewed here are of use for that purpose—if you can afford to buy them.

A Working Class Epic

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SACCO AND VANZETTI. By EUGENE LYONS. International Publishers Co., Inc. Price, $1.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET LARKIN

AFTER seven years of "torture by hope"; seven years of passion and prejudice; years in which the legal battle and the international agitation grew more and more complicated; years in which their defenders were divided among themselves, the fish peddler and the shoe worker were murdered by Massachusetts.

This epic of the working of class justice called for an historian. The shock of horror at their death, felt even by the most stout-hearted, even by those who had long been used to the horrors of class justice, had scarcely dulled a little, when that historian began his work. Eugene Lyons produced at white heat this book about Sacco and Vanzetti which is at once their biography, the history of their struggle for justice, a reference book for the details of the injustices heaped upon them, and a memorial to two simple, lovable men. It is a narrative of extraordinary power, a power derived from its very simplicity and clearness.

As the author himself says, Sacco and Vanzetti became such symbols of the hopes and struggles of the working class on the one hand, and of the fears and weaknesses of the master class on the other hand, that the world almost lost sight of them as human beings. In those last days, and in their last words, they became human enough, but then everything was foreshortened by the tragedy. Here they are put into focus again. The author has given us, with rare insight, the background of their early lives, of the development of their ideas, and with particular vividness, their feverish, unhappy, driven life as immigrants; abused, exploited, robbed of personality, bewildered by the cruelty of a country they had dreamed of as Utopia.

He puts the two men into their New England setting in two brilliant

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chapters in which he analyzes the peculiarities of the New England scene in time of strikes, war, and past-war hysteria. He points out every prejudice that was sharpened against them: foreigners in a land that hated "dagos"; atheists in the nest of Puritanism, draft evaders in the camps of hundred-per-centers, radicals and labor agitators in industrial communities that were in process of decline.

The actual story of the arrests, the trials, the legal motions always denied, and the analysis of the evidence, might be expected to be dull; they have been repeated so often. On the contrary, Eugene Lyons has made a gripping drama out of these endless details.

So the story is carried on, through the last tragic days. The book might have stopped there and have been a fine and a valuable book. But one more element is added that makes this book an indispensable part of every thinking person's library. This is the masterly analysis of what happened in the defense of the two men, of what the liberal support and the flurry in the newspapers meant, and finally of what the death of Sacco and Vanzetti means in terms of the lives of other workers.

"Their execution was not a miscarriage of justice. It was a deliberate, indeed a formal, carrying out of justice such as it is in the society of today."

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, Of THE COMMUNIST, published monthly at Chicago, Ill., for October, 1927.

State of Illinois
County of Cook ss

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Nicholas Dozenberg, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of The Communist, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher, Workers (Communist) Party of America, 1113 Washington Blvd.
Editor, Max Bedacht, 19 S. Lincoln St.
Managing editor, none.
Business Managers, Nicholas Dozenberg, 1113 Washington Blvd.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

The Workers (Communist) Party of America, 1113 Washington Blvd., Chicago, Ill. Jay Lovestone, Executive Secretary. A non-profit organization—political.

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5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is. (This information is required from daily publications only.)

NICHOLAS DOZENBERG
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of October, 1927.

S. T. Hammersmark.
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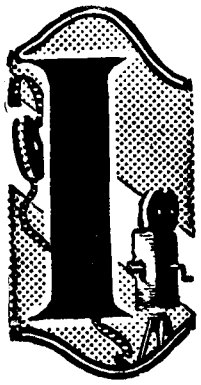

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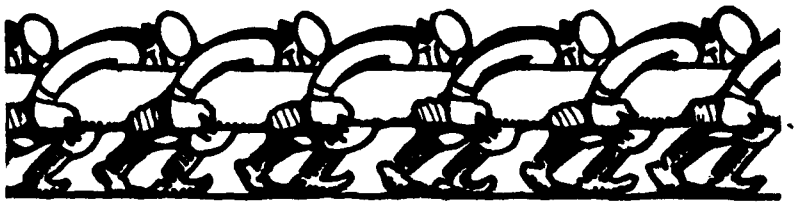

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